

# ADIRONDACK GATEWAY

## AT UPPER HUDSON

Recommendations for developing a new Adirondack Park  
visitor gateway in North Hudson, New York

SEPTEMBER 2020



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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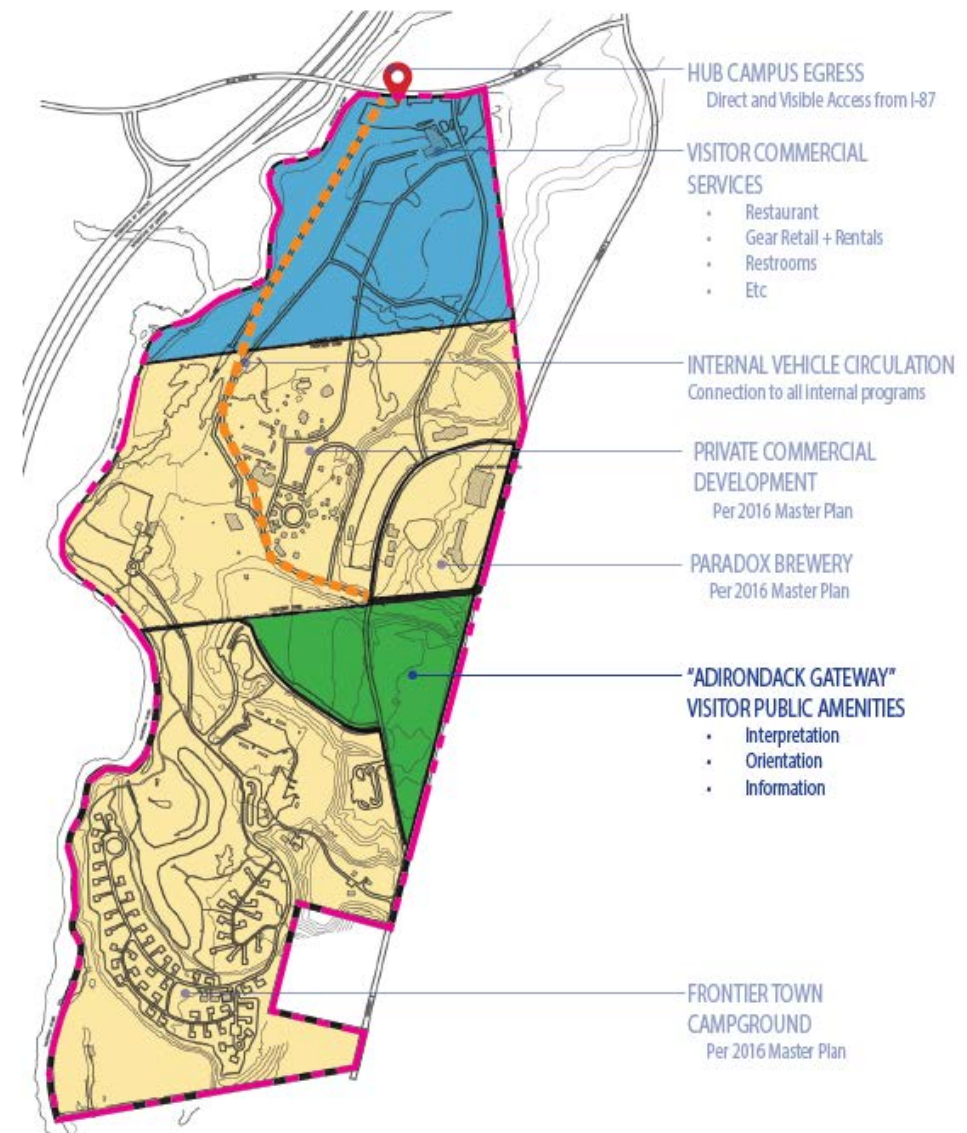
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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The vision for the Upper Hudson Recreation Hub is to establish the Five Towns region of the Adirondack Park (North Hudson, Newcomb, Indian Lake, Long Lake, and Minerva) as an accessible and welcoming recreation and tourism destination and make it a competitive alternative to the other popular outdoor destinations within the Park. A key component to the success of this new Hub will be a vibrant, comprehensive, and accessible program for visitor information, orientation, and interpretation introducing both newcomers and park veterans alike to the unique qualities of the region, including its natural beauty, outdoor recreation, and cultural and historical amenities. This report makes actionable recommendations for the inclusion of public recreational, educational, and engagement activities in the future interpretive program for the site. While originally conceived as a concept plan for a visitor facility (as recommended in the 2016 Upper Hudson Recreation Hub Master Plan), the scope was amended during the planning process to focus on the following objectives:

1. Analysis of existing site conditions to identify opportunities and challenges for land use suitability recommendations
2. Physical evaluation and recommendations for adaptive reuse and interpretation of the former Frontier Town structures
3. Regional and local stakeholder outreach and engagement stakeholder outreach to identify a common vision and key interpretive themes
4. Evaluation of local and regional interpretive assets

Critical to the success of this program is the inclusion of local voices in crafting the identity, the content, and the method of delivery for all the program's elements. Within this report is a detailed account of the planning team's methodology for collecting and analyzing relevant data, including a comprehensive inventory of local resources and outreach efforts to connect with stakeholders and regional partners. The report recommendations are intended to communicate a vision and provide guidance, crafted with community input, that will provide future planners and developers a foundation upon which to formally curate a robust interpretive and visitor orientation program focused on recreational opportunities in the Adirondack Park.



The Recreation Hub Plan Diagram

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### **1) The identity of the Adirondack Gateway is both a destination and a point of departure.**

The Gateway initiative should reflect a balance between dual missions; on one level, it must be embedded with sufficient interpretive and recreational amenities as to serve as an attraction in its own right. The Gateway will also need to build upon these interpretive features so visitors can make their experiential connection in the Park environs. One element that should not be a focal characteristic of the Adirondack Gateway's identity is Frontier Town. While there is a small but strong nostalgic following, the themes of this enterprise are outdated and foreign to most contemporary audiences.

### **2) The Adirondack Gateway will feature and promote local experiences that are accessible to all.**

Three key characteristics of the Adirondack Gateway that will immediately set it apart from all other regional facilities, especially as a destination for non-traditional visitors:

- Convenience of direct access off Interstate 87
- Geographic situation in a dynamic, mixed-use setting that offers a blend of amenities and services that are scarce within the larger region
- An alternative Adirondacks destination to the overwhelmed and challenging trails in Keene Valley or the more crowded Lake Placid

The challenge for the Gateway is to communicate the many types of experiences in of the Adirondack Park in ways that are new and unexpected, providing deeper, more contextualized insight than has ever been explored before. Creative curation and interpretation will provide relatability to newcomers and veterans alike.

### **3) The Town parcel and A-Frame parcel offer unique visitor opportunities within the greater Hub.**

The A-Frame and Town-owned parcels offer different benefits and drawbacks for future public amenities and visitor services. Project partners and stakeholders

overwhelmingly supported locating commercial activity close to Exit 29 and public amenities within Hub interior. Future offerings within the Hub should be physically and thematically integrated to support the goals for visitor orientation and education.

Two of the primary challenges to locating the Adirondack Gateway amenities at the A-Frame parcel are 1) the property is being developed as a private commercial enterprise and 2) the regulatory constraints upon the property may be too restrictive to develop both a planned private commercial enterprise and extensive orientation and interpretive amenities. While the A-Frame parcel is best suited for private commercial services, such as those identified in the owner's business plan, it may also help orient visitors to other educational, interpretive, and informational amenities within the larger Hub.

The physical separation of the Town parcel from the Exit 29 off-ramp makes this property well-suited for future public amenities. Much of the site is level and well-suited for development, and vehicular traffic and the regulatory constraints are not as limiting as they are at the A-Frame parcel. While the site lacks immediate access from the Northway, it has a strong physical connection to the other existing and planned uses within the Hub, including adjacency to the Frontier Town Campground.

### **4) The success of the Adirondack Gateway is dependent upon a cohesive and synergistic relationship with the other hub enterprises.**

The success of this proposal, however, is dependent upon the services and amenities provided by the other Hub enterprises. A consistent message in the engagement feedback was the detrimental impact that the lack of available regional services will have upon the Gateway's prospects, regardless of how compelling the Gateway's interpretive and orientation program may be. There must be a persuasive argument for tourists to seek all that they are looking for at Exit 29 to make their Adirondack experience incredible, rather than finding it at another destination with the Adirondack Park.

# I. INTRODUCTION

# PROJECT SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

The vision for the Upper Hudson Recreation Hub is to establish the Five Towns region of the Adirondack Park (North Hudson, Newcomb, Indian Lake, Long Lake, and Minerva) as an accessible and welcoming recreation and tourism destination and make it a competitive alternative to the other popular outdoor destinations within the Park. A key component to the success of this new Hub will be a vibrant, comprehensive, and accessible program for visitor information, orientation, and interpretation introducing both newcomers and park veterans alike to the unique qualities of the region, including its natural beauty, outdoor recreation, and cultural and historical amenities. This report makes actionable recommendations for the inclusion of public recreational, educational, and engagement activities in the future interpretive program for the site. While originally conceived as a concept plan for a visitor facility (as recommended in the 2016 Upper Hudson Recreation Hub Master Plan), the scope was amended during the planning process to focus on the following objectives:

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Critical to the success of this program is the inclusion of local voices in crafting the identity, the content, and the method of delivery for all the program's elements. Within this report is a detailed account of the planning team's methodology for collecting and analyzing relevant data, including a comprehensive inventory of local resources and outreach efforts to connect with stakeholders and regional partners. The report recommendations are intended to communicate a vision and provide guidance, crafted with community input, that will provide future planners and developers a foundation upon which to formally curate a robust interpretive and visitor orientation program focused on recreational opportunities in the Adirondack Park.



The site encompassing the Upper Hudson Recreation Hub today



Frontier Town operated on this site in North Hudson from 1952 to 1998.

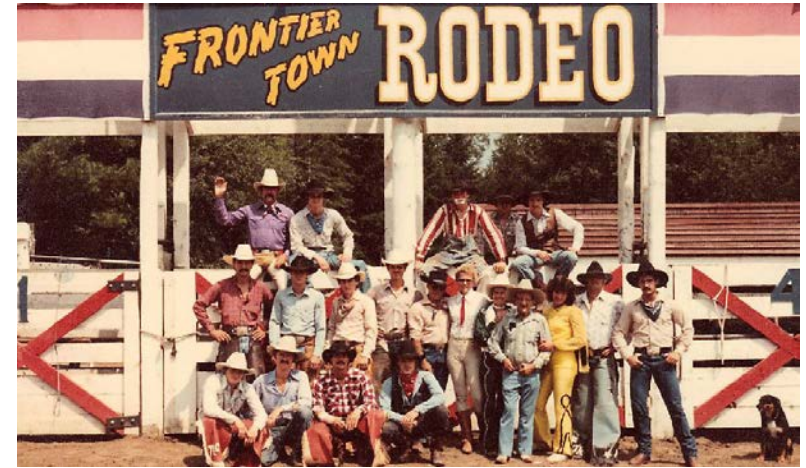
# PROJECT HISTORY

For several decades, North Hudson was home to a popular theme park called “Frontier Town” that both celebrated an idealized version of the American West, while also featuring locally-relevant attractions, such as a working sawmill and forge. The family-friendly content of the theme park was a draw for visitors across the northeastern United States and supported a healthy service industry reflective of mid-century automobile-centric tourism, consisting of motels, restaurants, and gas stations. However, with the eventual decline of Frontier Town and the lure of visitors to more picturesque (authentic) corners of the Adirondack Park, North Hudson saw drop in both its visitation numbers and permanent population with the closure of Frontier Town in the late 1990s.

Governor Cuomo announced his vision for an Adirondack Gateway at Northway Exit 29 in 2017 to increase tourism in the “Five Towns” area of the Adirondack Park through improved visitor access and facilities. The cornerstone of this vision is the Community Connector Trail Plan, a recreational trail system connecting visitor services (lodging, food, equipment) and amenities (activities and attractions) throughout the Five Towns. The historic Frontier Town site, and its proximity to the primary transit corridors I-87 and Route 9, was identified as the logical launching point to this multi-town, multi-modal trail system.

The Upper Hudson Recreational Hub Master Plan was developed in 2016 to provide a framework for the development of this launching point (the Hub), envisioned as a campus of public amenities and commercial services that all support the broader goals of the Five Towns Trail System. The Frontier Town Campground, Equestrian and Day Use Area and the Paradox Brewery and Tasting Room (both opened in 2019) were the first two projects identified in the Master Plan to become a reality. The Master Plan had also recommended the development of a visitor facility intended to provide an experience that orients visitors and showcases the region’s world-class recreation offerings. The original intention for this report in early 2019 was to provide architectural and interpretive concepts for a physical visitor facility at the Upper Hudson Recreation Hub. However, changes in on-site circumstances since the beginning of the planning work resulted in a collective decision among the client group to develop a more general plan for public amenities and interpretation, along with considerations for adaptive reuse and interpretation of the former Frontier Town structures.

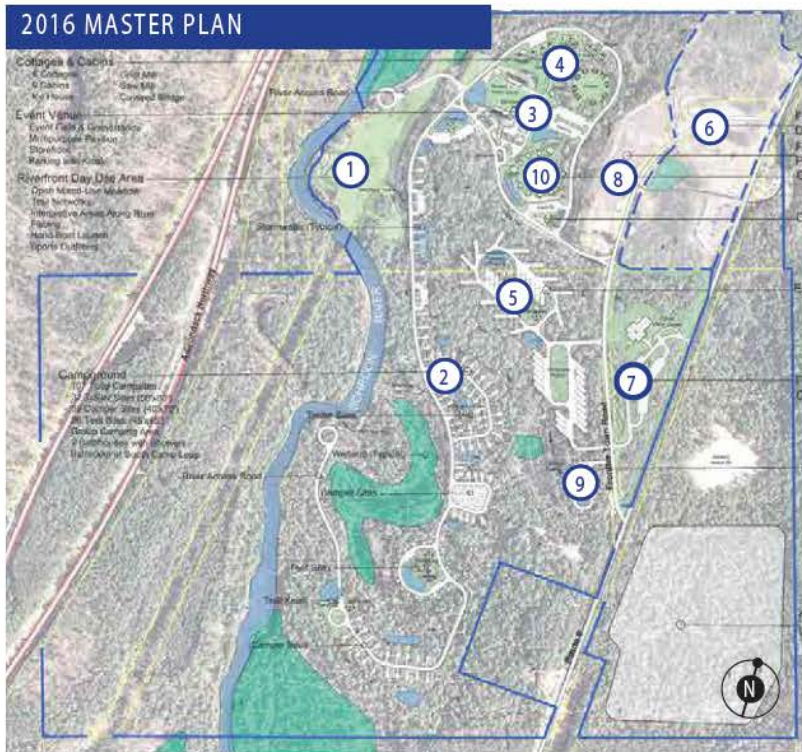
At the time of the 2016 Upper Hudson Recreational Hub Master Plan development, the land comprising the Hub was owned by three parties: an approximately 100-acre parcel including the remains of the former Frontier Town theme park owned by Essex County;



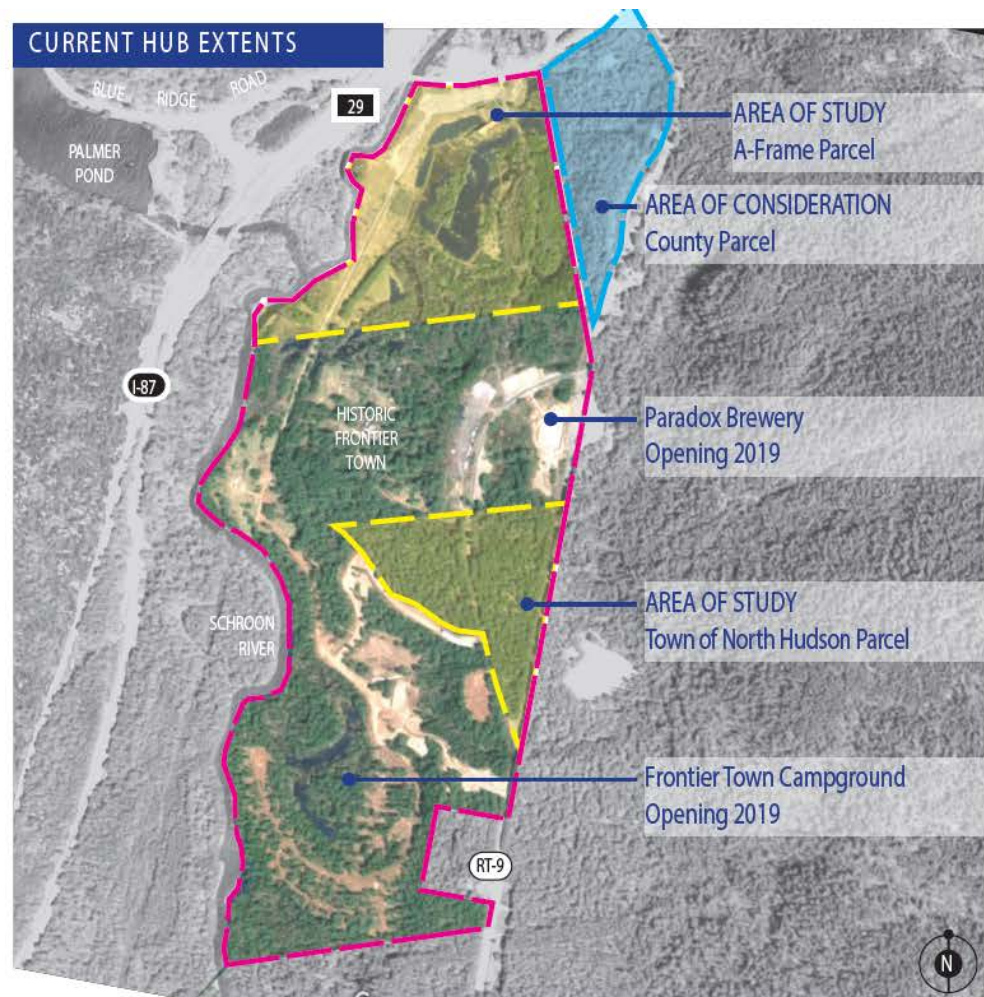
Visitors pose at the former Frontier Town Rodeo



NYS Department of Environmental Conservation’s Frontier Town equestrian campsite and day-use area opened in 2019



- |                             |                                  |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. River Front Day Use Area | 6. Future Commercial Development |
| 2. Campground               | 7. Visitor Facility              |
| 3. Event Venue              | 8. Parking Area                  |
| 4. Cottages + Cabins        | 9. Trailhead                     |
| 5. Equestrian Area          | 10. Glamping                     |

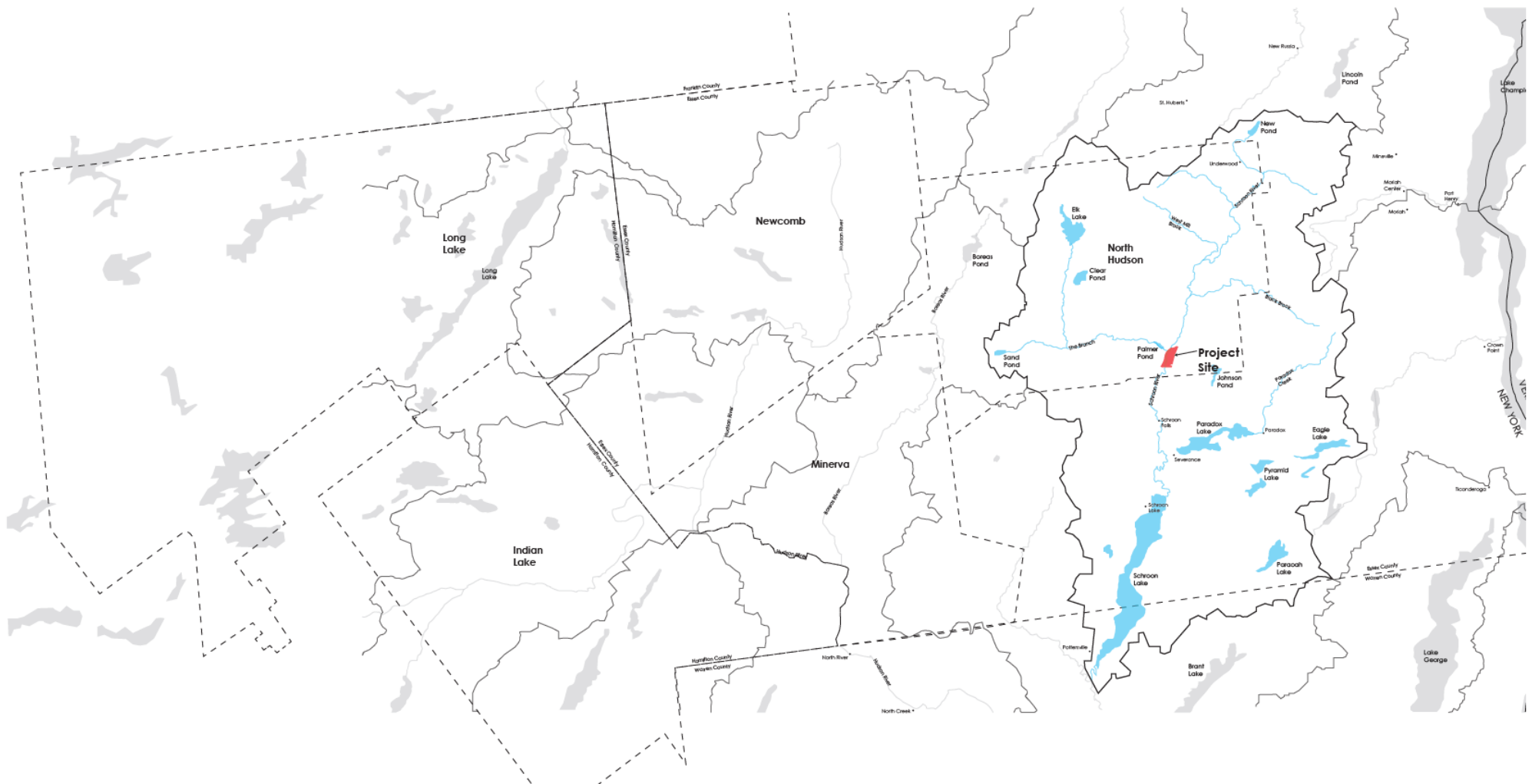


the southern-most parcel, approximately 200 acres of heavily-forested land, owned by the Town of Hudson; and a small, private inholding. Approximately 97 acres of the town property was designated for the new DEC campground, with the remaining 21 acres reserved for the development of a visitor facility for orientation and interpretation. Since this time, a portion of the Essex County property was sold to a private business interest (Paradox Brewery), consistent with the Master Plan’s proposal. An addition to the geographic area of the Hub is a northern private parcel referred to as the “A-Frame parcel,” owned by Aleeze Enterprises Inc. and named for a distinctive on-site structure. The property owner has expressed a desire to be an active partner to support the vision for the Recreation Hub.











For the purposes of the report, we will refer to the site identified by the magenta dashed line on the above right plan as the Upper Hudson Recreation Hub (“Hub”), and the interpretive programs conceptually as the “the Adirondack Gateway” to reflect the site as both an activity center and launching place for exploring the Adirondacks.

## II. EXISTING CONDITIONS

# REGIONAL CONTEXT



## Legend

-  Upper Schroon River Watershed Boundary
-  Upper Hudson Recreation Hub Boundary
-  Lakes / Ponds
-  Rivers / Streams
-  Surrounding Watershed Boundaries
-  Surrounding Lakes / Ponds
-  Surrounding Rivers / Streams
-  State/ Adirondack Park Border
-  County Border
-  Five Towns' Border

Located at the confluence of the Schroon River and The Branch (ancillary stream of the Boreas River), the study area lies in the middle of the Schroon River Watershed, a division of the larger Upper Hudson River Watershed. As a 67.7-mile long tributary of the Hudson River, the Schroon River runs through the towns of North Hudson, Schroon, Chester, Bolton and Warrensburg, where it confluences with the Hudson River. The central location of the Hub exemplifies the perfect opportunity to connect points of interests, including Long Lake, Indian Lake, Boreas Pond, Elk Lake, Schroon Lake, and others within the shown area.

Refer to Appendix C for additional regional maps and analysis.

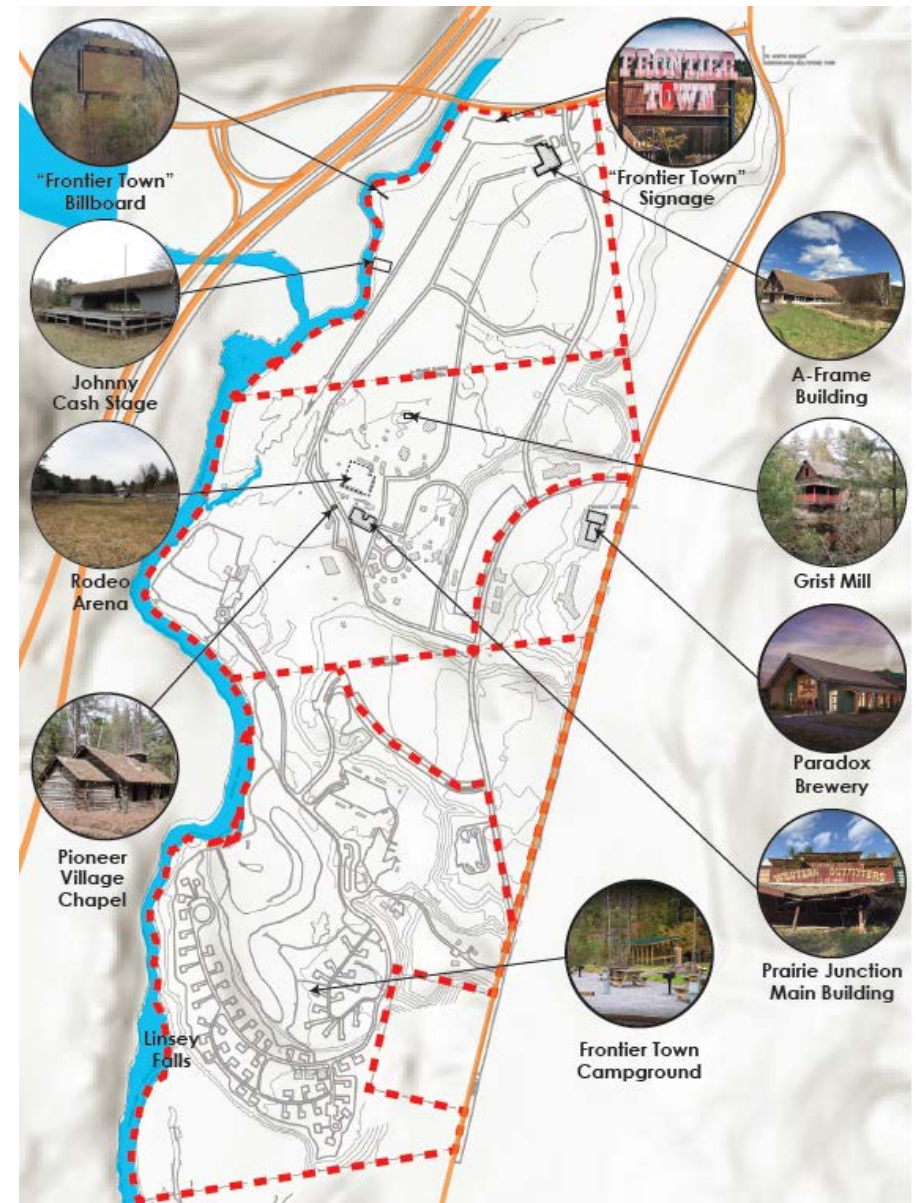
# SITE CONTEXT

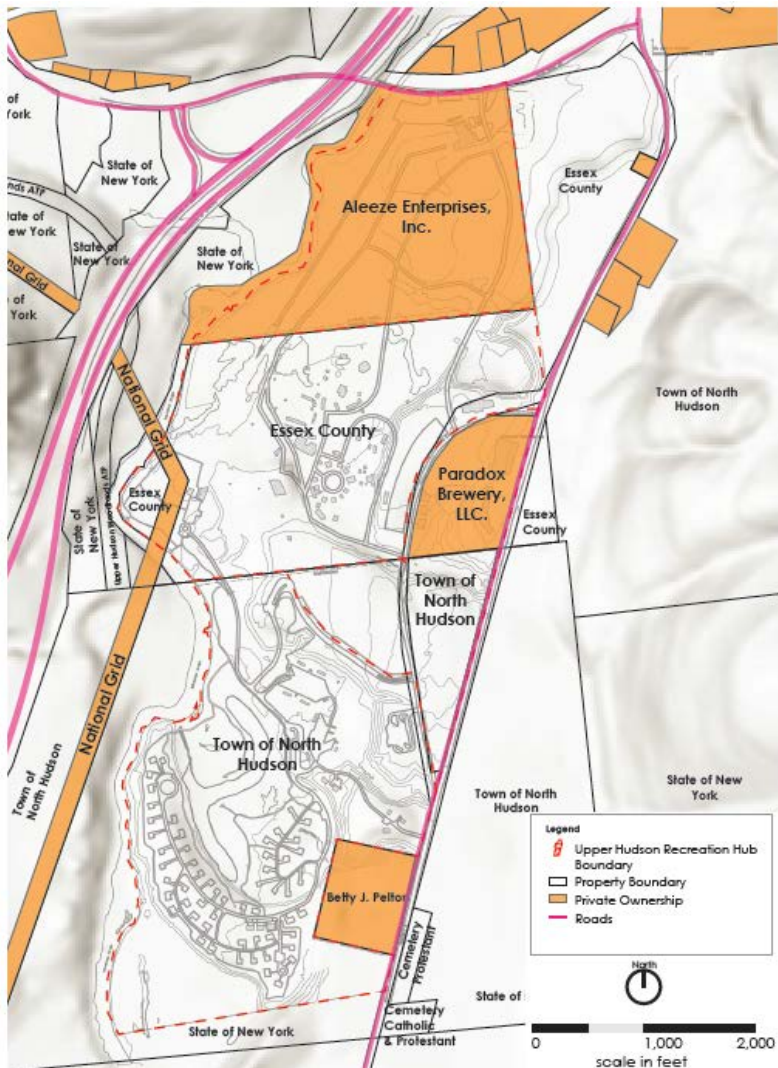
The overall Hub site is located in the foothills of the Adirondack High Peaks and on the east bank of the Schroon River. Interstate-87 (west), US Route 9 (east), and Blue Ridge Road (north) hug the 400-acre site. On the northwest side are the confluence of the Branch and Schroon Rivers. To the north is the Hamlet of North Hudson, with a total town population of 237.

Within the Hub site boundary are two primary properties being considered to deliver visitor orientation and interpretation amenities, including the A-Frame parcel (the 55 acres owned by Aleeze Enterprise Inc.) and the Town of North Hudson parcel (21 acres north of the DEC-operated Frontier Town campsite). Notably, the A-Frame parcel houses a dilapidated stage where Johnny Cash once performed, an old Frontier Town billboard visible from I-87, various multi-purpose trails, and the iconic A-Frame building that was once a restaurant for Frontier Town customers.

Additional opportunities for orientation and interpretation may be considered at the Essex County parcel (100-acre former Frontier Town theme park). Within the limits of this parcel are many deteriorating structures reminiscent of the "Wild West," including a grist mill, rodeo, church, and general store, among others. In recent years, nature has taken over and the remaining Frontier Town structures are in various varying degrees of decay from years of neglect.

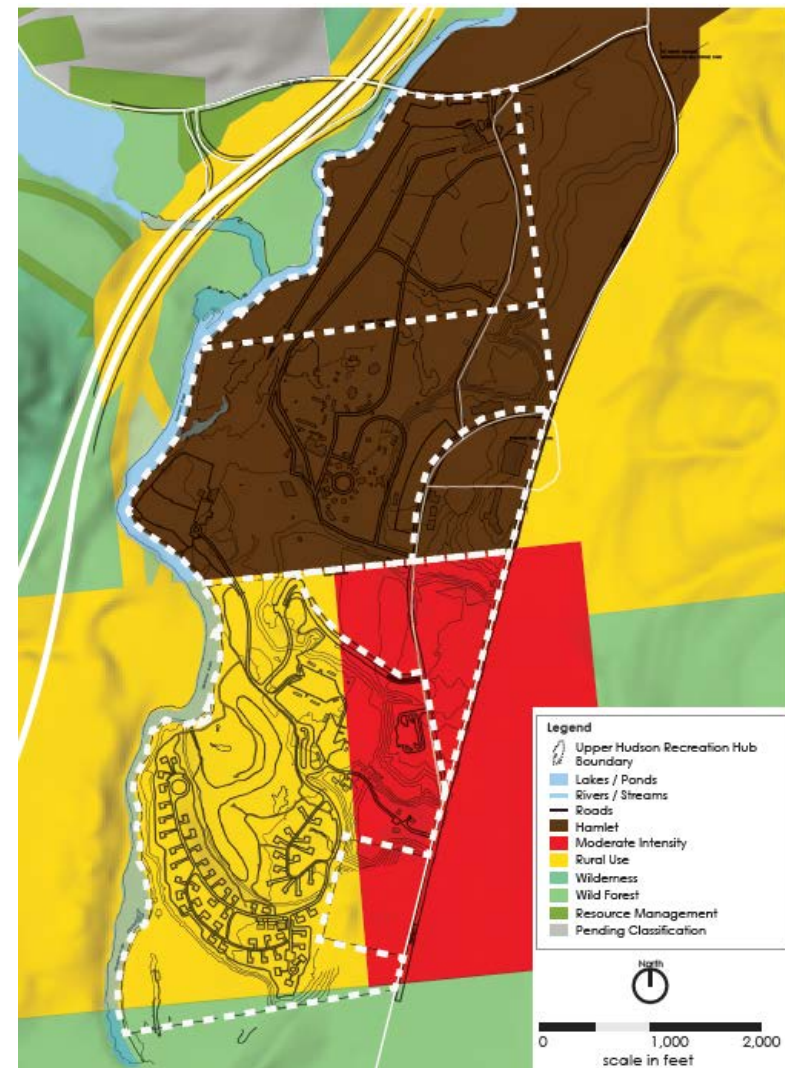
Refer to Appendix B for additional maps and site analysis.





## PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

The property owners on-site include: Aleeze Enterprise, Inc., Essex County; Paradox Brewery, LLC.; Town of North Hudson; and National Grid. The two study areas for this project are owned by Aleeze Enterprise, Inc. and the Town of North Hudson.



## ADIRONDACK PARK AGENCY (APA) LAND USE

The APA regulates development of private land in the Adirondack Park to ensure appropriate land uses and density. The four land use classifications that apply to the project site include Hamlet (hamlet of North Hudson), Moderate Intensity (most uses are permitted; concentrated residential development is most appropriate), Rural Use (most uses are permitted; residential uses and reduced intensity development that preserve rural character is most suitable), and a small amount of Wild Forest (State of New York).

# REGULATORY CONTROLS

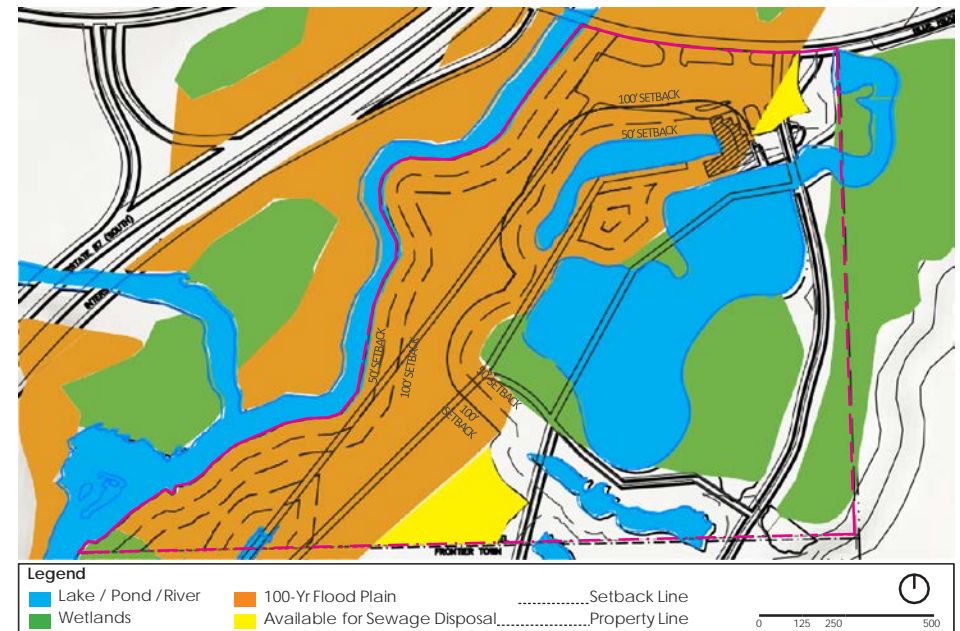
The full Hub is subject to significant regulatory controls from numerous governmental agencies, including the Adirondack Park Agency (APA), the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC), New York State Health Department (NYS DOH), New York State Department of Transportation (NYS DOT), and New York State Department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (NYS OPRHP). For the purpose of this review, we will look only at the two parcels that are under consideration for visitor orientation and interpretation: the A-Frame parcel and the Town-owned parcel.

## A-FRAME PARCEL

Given its prominent location at the northern location of the Hub campus, visible to vehicles on the Northway and immediately accessible off of Exit 29, the A-Frame parcel has a commanding presence as an entry point to North Hudson. Despite these advantages, the natural features of the parcel are subject to regulatory controls which limit the type and scale of improvements that can occur.

Classified as Hamlet, a significant portion of the parcel is covered with or adjacent to water, specifically rivers (classified “recreational”, requiring a 50’ building setback and 100’ sewage disposal setback) and wetlands (also a 50’ building and 100’ sewage disposal setback). Much of the rest of the site is within the 100-year flood plain, which presents challenging restrictions for locating buildings within and is restricted from locating any sewage disposal. This leaves limited space on-site for locating any sewage disposal infrastructure, which limits what kind and size of development can occur on this site.

Less than two non-contiguous acres (85,500 SF) of the 50+ acre site is available for sewage disposal. A likely scenario is that the existing A-Frame footprint will be redeveloped and the adjacent available area of 13,300 SF will be utilized for sewage disposal. Based upon the existing soil type (loam, sandy loam) and the associated application rate (0.70), we estimate a maximum daily flow of 9,300 GPD possible. Utilizing NYS DEC’s design standards for wastewater systems and customer projections based on the owner’s proposed commercial development plans (fast food restaurant, retail, event/concert venue, and outdoor attractions), this flow rate will be sufficient, even during peak months. Expanding the capacity of this facility to include additional amenities, however, may present challenges for both siting the building and associated sewage disposal and parking infrastructure.



Plan of the A-Frame parcel showing the impact of regulatory setbacks on development



A-Frame exterior



A-Frame interior

## TOWN PARCEL

With limited sensitive natural systems present within the property extents, the Town parcel is less impacted from regulatory controls over internal site features. However, even though the site and water do not share a common edge, there is a remote potential for impacts from development due to the proximity of the Schroon River.

With over 80% of the parcel classified as “Moderate Intensity Use” and the remaining portion classified as “Rural,” there is a required building setback of 50 feet and 75 feet, respectively, in these zones due to the Schroon River’s classification as a “Recreational” river within 1/4 mile. Additionally, the creek along the northern property line requires a setback as well. Even with these restrictions, the Town parcel offers 16.3 acres of area available for development (13.3 acres available for sewage disposal).



Plan of the Town-owned parcel showing the impact of regulatory setbacks on development

## REGULATORY CONTROLS SUMMARY

### APA Land Classifications

Public or Semi-Public Building (APA Regional Project Type)

Hamlet	All Land Uses	NV
Moderate	Class B - Secondary Use	1.3 Ac / PB
Rural	Class B - Secondary Use	8.5 Ac / PB

Secondary Uses are those which are generally acceptable depending upon their particular location and impact upon nearby uses and conformity with the overall intensity guidelines for the uses.

### Wild, Scenic and Recreational River Systems Schroon

River is “Recreational”

#### Shoreline

Bldg Setback:	50’ Hamlet and Moderate 75’ Rural
Tree Removal:	within 35’ MHW, up to 30% in excess of 6” DBA / 10 Yr within 6’ MHW, no veg / except 30% shoreline on any lot

APA Class A (a project will become Class A Regional Project Type for any of the following):

Hamlet	Wetland Involvement Over 40’ Ht Bldg
Moderate	Within 1/4 Mile W/S/R River Wetland Involvement Over 40’ Ht Bldg
Rural	Within 1/4 Mile W/S/R River Wetland Involvement Within 150’ of State / Federal Road Over 40’ Ht Bldg

#### Other regulations:

NYS DOT	Highway Access (Curb Cut) Permit, US Route 9 if access directly
NYS DEC	SPDES Permit / Sewage Disposal (over 1000 GPD) SWPPP and Stormwater Permit (over 1 Ac)
NYS DOH	Sewage Disposal (under 1000 GPD)
NYS OPRHP	Cultural Resources Clearance from SHPO

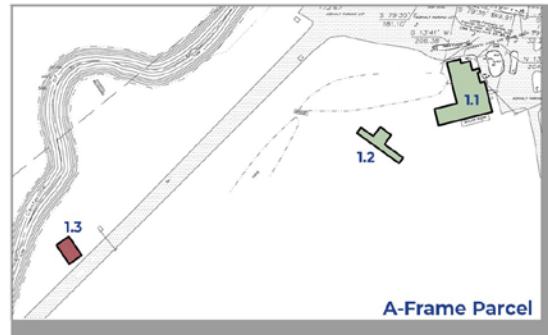


**KEY PLAN & ASSESSMENT SUMMARY**

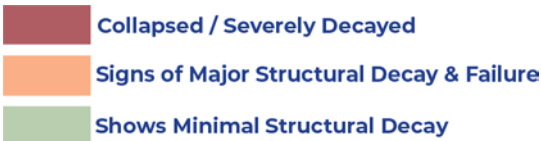


- 1) A-FRAME AREA
  - 1. A-Frame Building - Minimal Decay
  - 2. Stage Line Building - Minimal Decay
  - 3. Stage - Major Decay
- 2) PRAIRIE JUNCTION
  - 1. Prairie Junction Main Building - Collapsed
  - 2. Fort Custer Log Fortress Walls - Minimal Decay
  - 3. Fort Custer Log Building - Collapsed
  - 4. Prairie Junction Building 1 - Collapsed
  - 5. Prairie Junction Building 2 - Minimal Decay
  - 6. Prairie Junction Building 3 - Minimal Decay
  - 7. Carousel Park Building - Minimal Decay

- 3) PIONEER VILLAGE
  - 1. Church - Decayed
  - 2. Pioneer Village Building 1 - Minimal Decay
  - 3. Pioneer Village Stage Line - Major Decay
  - 4. Pioneer Village Stable Building 1 - Major Decay
  - 5. Pioneer Village Stable Building 2 - Minimal Decay
  - 6. Pioneer Village Building 2 - Major Decay
  - 7. Pioneer Village Building 3 - Minimal Decay
  - 8. Pioneer Village Building 4 - Minimal Decay
  - 9. Pioneer Village Building 5 - Collapsed
  - 10. Pioneer Village Building 6 - Collapsed
  - 11. Pioneer Village Building 7 - Major Decay
  - 12. Pioneer Village Building 8 - Major Decay
  - 13. Pioneer Village Building 9 - Minimal Decay
  - 14. Petting Zoo Building - Minimal Decay



- 4) RODEO ARENA
  - 1. Main Arena Grand Stands - Major Decay
  - 2. Main Arena Announcer's Booth - Minimal Decay
  - 3. Main Arena Stable Building 1 - Major Decay
  - 4. Main Arena Stable Building 2 - Minimal Decay
  - 5. Main Arena Stable Building 3 - Minimal Decay
- 5) ROTH'S FORGE VILLAGE
  - 1. Covered Bridge - Minimal Decay
  - 2. Grist Mill Building 1 - Minimal Decay
  - 3. Grist Mill Building 2 - Collapsed
  - 4. Saw Mill Building - Major Decay
  - 5. Museum - Collapsed
  - 6. Ice House Building - Major Decay
  - 7. Rest Room Building - Minimal Decay



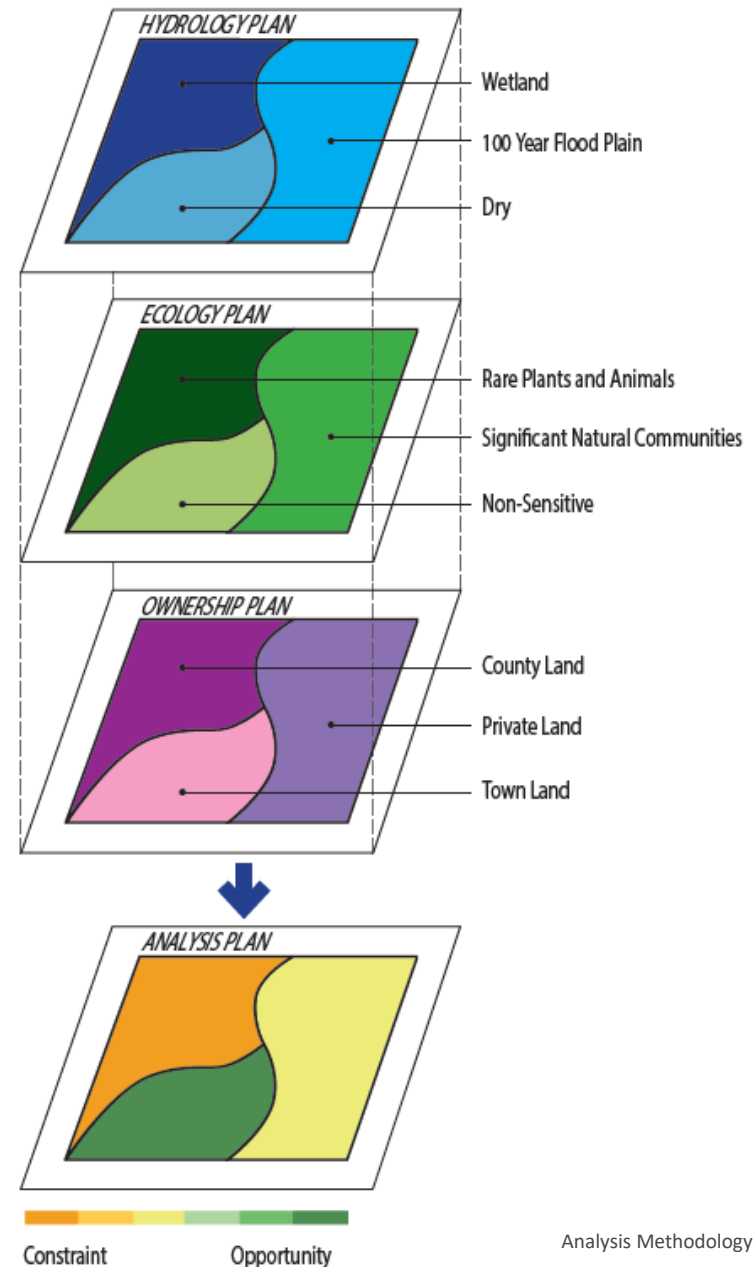
# OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS ANALYSIS

Geographic opportunities and constraints were identified by overlaying existing map data layers to assess general environmental suitability throughout the site for development that supports the project's program and goals. Superimposing layers of physiographic information allows us to identify:

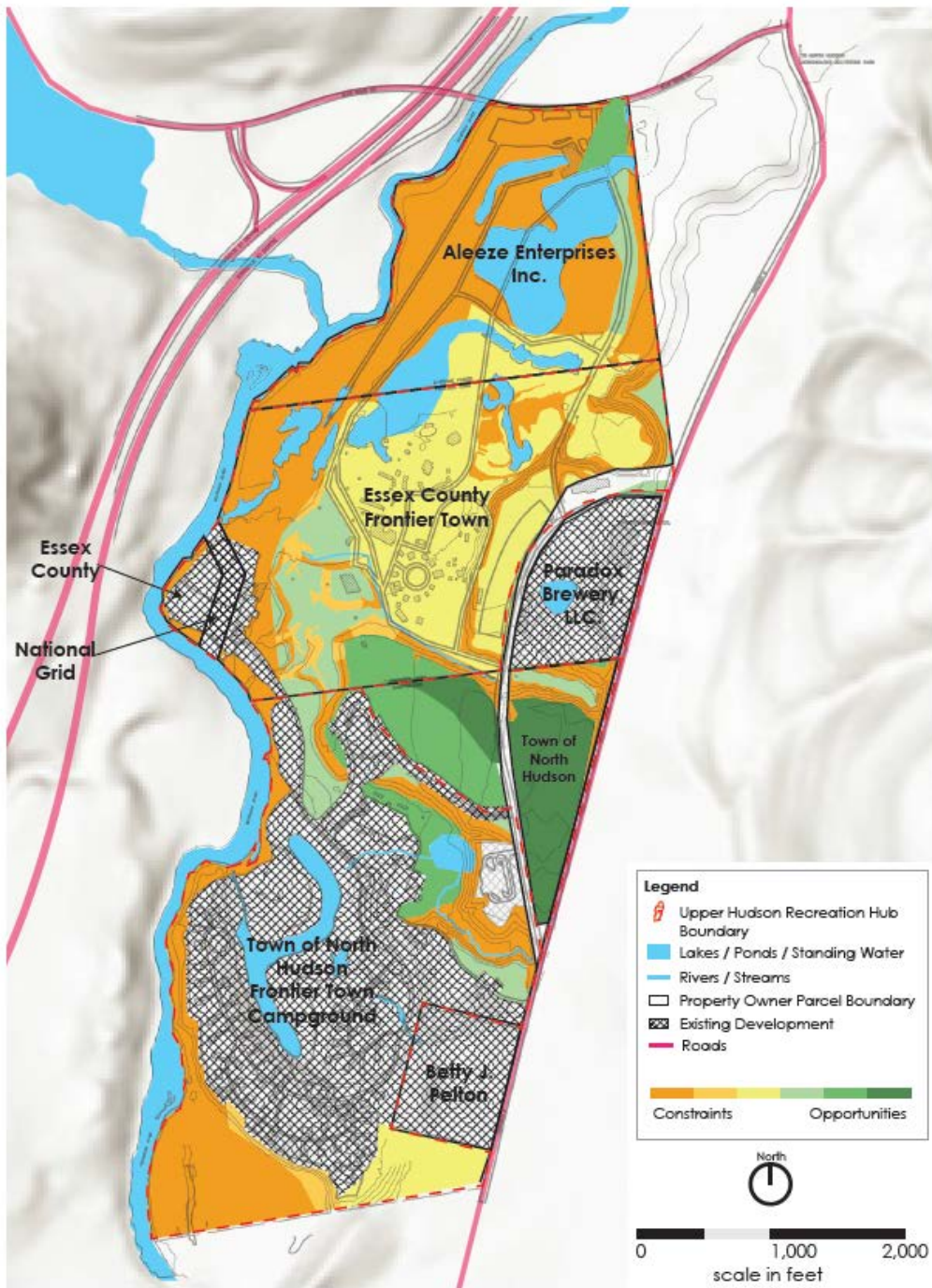
1. Where the most-desirable site attributes overlap (best suited for the project's goals, or an "opportunity")
2. Where the least-desirable site attributes overlap (least suited to achieve the project's goals, or a "constraint")
3. Where a mix of desirable and non-desirable attributes overlap (landing somewhere on a spectrum in-between)

The diagram on the right graphically demonstrates the process for overlaying data. The desirable areas of "Dry" land on the hydrology plan, "Non-Sensitive" systems on the ecology plan, and "Town Land" (in other words, currently land owned by the client) on the ownership plan, all combine to reflect an **Opportunity Area** that can support a new visitor amenities and associated infrastructure. Other combinations shown ("Flood Plain" + "Sensitive Ecology" + "Private Land" and/or "Wetland" + "Rare Ecology" + "County Land") each reflect an either **Moderate Opportunity** or a **Constraint**, respectively.

Each layer is weighted differently to achieve a balanced analysis. Undesirable attributes like property ownership or viewshed do not carry the same weight as wetland areas or sensitive ecologies, as some of these attributes can be mitigated while others cannot. Therefore, the critical data layers Slope and Soils carry a factor of 1.5x, and the Hydrology and Ecological Assessment layers carry 2x the weight of the other data layers in this analysis. While some areas may appear as constrained, or unsuitable for supporting new building construction, this analysis does not specifically imply that these areas cannot feature outdoor-based facilities and activities such as parking lots, hiking trails, or interpretive exhibits.



Analysis Methodology Diagram



Opportunities and Constraints Map

The western edge of the Hub is dominated by the Schroon River and its associated flood-plain and the resulting soils, which yields some of the heaviest concentrations of “Constraint” designations. Bleeding eastward into the site is a system of creeks, wetlands, and ponds, especially at the northern end of the Hub, which heavily impacts the A-Frame parcel. Land identified as an “Opportunity” in the A-Frame parcel is concentrated in the northeast corner, coinciding with the current A-Frame location which would benefit any planned (limited) expansion and still enjoy clear visibility and direct access from the Northway. While only a fraction of the A-Frame parcel is appropriate for future development, the constrained areas may not exclude outdoor-based programming.

Much of the Essex County parcel, host to the vestiges of Frontier Town, reflects a balance of suitable development possibilities across the spectrum. However, the most desirable site attributes are focused at the southern edge of the parcel, setting up a strong relationship with the adjacent Town parcel.

The Town parcel itself resides on some of the highest, driest, and most level land within the Hub boundaries, with limited influence of any sensitive systems. While challenged by limited visibility from I-87, the parcel can be easily accessed from both US Route 9 and from internal roadways. The site is triangulated by the campground, Paradox Brewery, and the planned commercial development for the Essex County parcel. The majority of this parcel is designated as an “Opportunity” area.

### III. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

# ENGAGEMENT METHODOLOGY

Critical to the success of this project was the robust participation of local and regional stakeholders through a series of structured engagement meetings, workshops, and surveys. Participants included two distinct groups: the project client group and project stakeholders. The client group included the Open Space Institute, Department of Environmental Conservation, Town of North Hudson, and Essex County.

The client group and design team identified partners representing the local and regional community that have an operational or mission-based connection to the Adirondack Gateway’s vision and objectives. The process engaged local and regional participants representing state and local government agencies, the local business community, hospitality providers, retailers, arts and culture institutions, recreation industry providers, and conservation-minded organizations. Focus group meetings were designed to give agencies, businesses, and organizations with similar interests the opportunity to express opinions freely without challenge from competing interests.

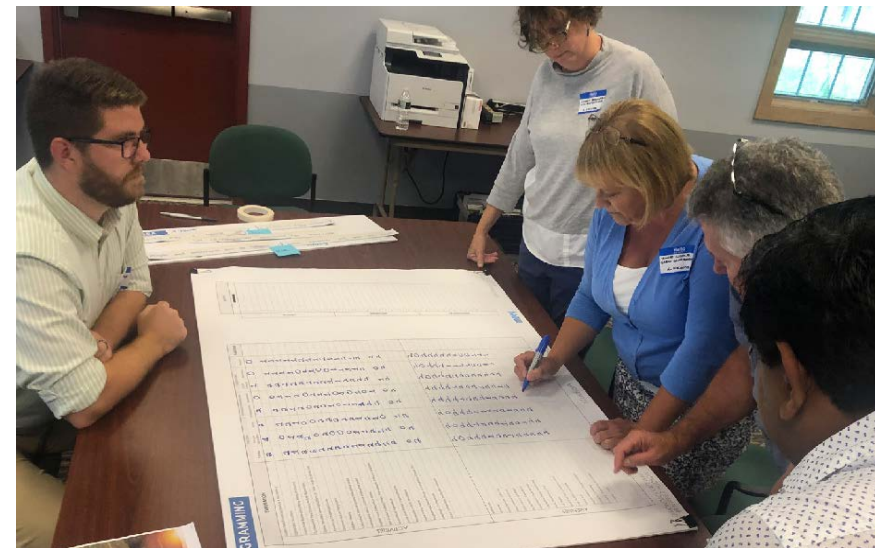
A culminating “experience workshop” was facilitated with all project stakeholders and partners to identify: 1) the overarching character and vision for the Adirondack Gateway, 2) desired interpretive opportunities, and 3) a comprehensive programmatic distribution of visitor amenities within and surrounding the Hub campus.

Additionally, a digital survey was distributed to recent Frontier Town Campground users with questions about the camper and their group, their plans within the Adirondack Park, and the programs and services they would like to see represented in the future Adirondack Gateway.

Engagement and survey results and feedback can be found in Appendices E through H.



Participants discussing opportunities at the project kick-off meeting in May 2019



Participants discuss project programming at the August 2019 Experience Workshop

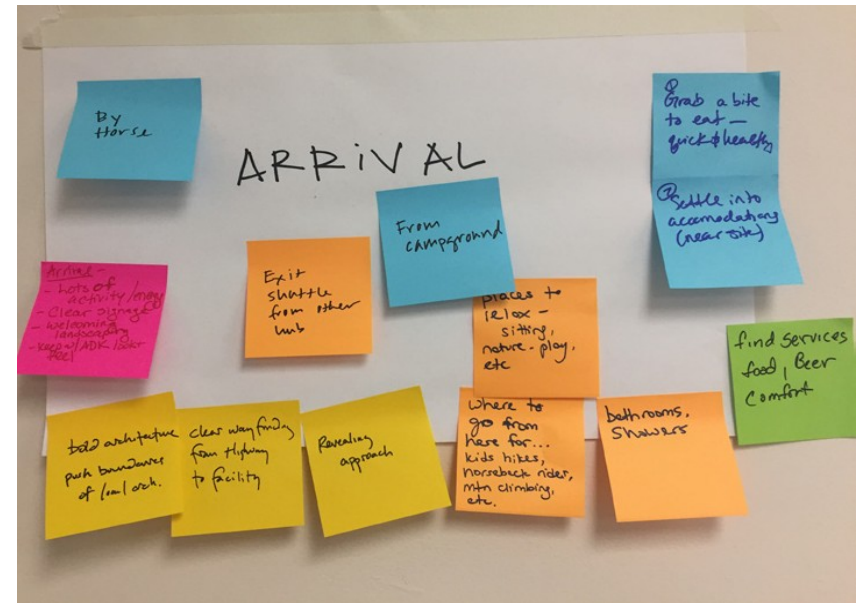
# FEEDBACK SUMMARY

Overall, participants indicated a strong desire to attract non-traditional visitors to the Adirondack Gateway and introduce visitors to the story of the Adirondack Park through tangible connections and experiences. Ultimately the Adirondack Gateway interpretive and orientation amenities would serve as contributing components (“a spoke in the wheel”) of the larger Hub site development that would also include robust private and public amenities (food, retail, lodging, etc.).

The major themes that emerged from the stakeholder focus meetings included:

- 1) the critical role a facility would play as part of the larger Hub development, as well as skepticism about the ability of a visitor facility to attract new visitors to the region without a robust commercial services component;
- 2) the desire to attract a diverse consumer base;
- 3) the hope that the Hub will be an economic driver for the region, primarily through connecting visitors to the area amenities, attractions and services;
- 4) the need for a human connection at the Gateway in form of either a concierge, tour guides, or educators; and
- 5) a strong opinion that the Frontier Town identity will not appeal to a contemporary audience.

Complete engagement results can be found in Appendix F.



Journey mapping exercise



Participants imagined what visitors will find exciting at the Adirondack Gateway

## IV. INTERPRETATION AND ORIENTATION

# INTERPRETIVE FRAMEWORK

Interpretive opportunities at the Adirondack Gateway can deliver important information about the Adirondacks in meaningful and engaging ways as well as shape visitors' experiences. A repeated theme throughout the stakeholder engagement process was the tremendous opportunity for the Adirondack Gateway to feature information about the extensive outdoor recreation and tourism options in both the Adirondack Park as a whole as well as the immediate vicinity of the Five Towns region and Essex County. The goal is to engage a broad spectrum of users with these recreation amenities by developing an accessible interpretive and orientation program that orients visitors to variety of unique Adirondack experiences.

Two important steps for developing an interpretive program at the Adirondack Gateway are to **distinguish it from the other visitor information sites in the Adirondack Park** with a unique focus and mission, and to **tap into the rapidly expanding recreation tourism industry** in the Adirondack Park. Marketing of recreation tourism opportunities in the Adirondacks has long focused on the most popular recreation destinations, leading to unsustainable overuse. New interpretive exhibits and orientation tools can help divert visitors to the relatively underutilized recreation options in the Five Towns and greater Adirondacks.

**Planning for flexibility** in the narrative and exhibits is also important so that interpretation and orientation tools can continue to evolve over time. For example, twenty years ago, who knew how personal technology would dramatically influence how we recreate today? In another twenty years, what changes can we expect? Will climate change radically influence what types of recreational pursuits visitors can explore in the Adirondack Park?

## A MULTI-FACETED DESTINATION

If there is any lesson to learn from the Frontier Town theme park, it is that a big, fun attraction can succeed at Exit 29 for fifty years or more. In fact, making the Gateway a recognizable destination in its own right may be important for inviting and engaging a new-comer audience.



Mobile tour concept for Green Lakes State Park

Meanwhile, the Gateway also needs to function as a departure point, a launchpad for adventures into the Adirondacks. Balancing these twin overarching modalities may be key to the Gateway's interpretive success.

A third modality for the Gateway could be as a hub or home base. Many guests are expected to stay at the Frontier Town campground or nearby lodging. These guests may desire orientation tools or interpretive elements several times in a multi-day visit. Providing sufficient interest to sustain prolonged visitation will depend upon how well the Gateway is integrated into the larger town and region. Future plans include a diverse array of commercial services to be offered on-site, so building a strong relationships with neighboring amenities may be just as important as the connections out into the region.

# REGIONAL INVENTORY

Several visitor interpretation centers and similar institutions exist within the Five Towns and surrounding region. Future development of either public or private visitor amenities at the Adirondack Gateway should not only differentiate from existing resources, but also support them. Some of the major interpretive institutions and visitor centers in the region include:

**Adirondack Experience, The Museum on Blue Lake Mountain-** “Expands public understanding of Adirondack history and the relationship between people and the Adirondack wilderness, fostering informed choices for the future.”

**Wild Center-** “Experiences, exhibits and programs designed to open new ways to look into our relationship with nature.” One of the Wild Center’s prominent features is its elevated Wild Walk.

**Adirondack Interpretive Center-** Features outdoor trails through several habitats, a Northern Forest exhibit, Kids Zone, and opportunities to talk with ecologists.

**Paul Smith’s College Visitor Interpretive Center-** “Fosters connections with nature for students, local residents, and regional visitors by providing outdoor recreation opportunities, experiential education programs, and year-round art exhibitions.”

**Queensbury Adirondacks Welcome Center** - Features interactive tourism kiosks, selfie opportunities, local foods vending machines, and an outdoor play for children.

**High Peaks Rest Area** - Promotes hiking in the Adirondacks, especially on less popular trails, and provides information about the park.

**Camp Santonini** - A landmarked surviving great camp being restored by NYS DEC, the Town of Newcomb, and Adirondack Architectural Heritage.



Wild Walk at the Wild Center



Interior of the Queensbury Adirondacks Welcome Center

# INTERPRETATION AND ORIENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

## AUDIENCE

A challenge facing the tourism industry in the Adirondack Park is the narrow demographic that has traditionally patronized it, mostly older and white (although this has recently been changing along with the increased usership). As identified during the stakeholder engagement process, an interpretive program at this site should be accessible to the broadest coalition possible and cut across age, ability level, ethnicity and race, gender and orientation, interests, and socio-economic backgrounds.

With several major urban centers with a few hours' drive, an Adirondack Gateway interpretive program that emphasizes accessibility and inclusiveness has the potential to tap into a large market that is currently not spending their tourism dollars in Adirondacks. With the expanded appeal, however, the overall content and messaging runs the risk of getting diluted by trying to cast too wide a net.

Information and interpretation need to be strategically distributed through a wide variety of platforms, tailored to specific users. That way, average park visitors don't have to wade through excessive information before finding the specific item they were searching for. Crafting a visitor experience to attract a diverse group of users should include:

- **Start the journey at home.** Create a website that allows potential visitors to begin their exploration of the Adirondacks and plan their trip from their home or on their mobile device.
- **Provide multiple platforms by which to communicate information to reach the widest audience.** Provide a range of age-appropriate exhibits to accommodate cross-generational interest. Provide options in different languages. Include both static and interactive, stationary and takeaway, analog and digital, etc.
- **Plan for family visits and station cross-generational exhibitry** within eyesight of one another so that parents and their children can simultaneously explore.

- **Curate exhibits to celebrate recreation opportunities for people of all abilities and mobility levels.** Recognize that an outdoor experience for a first-time park visitor on a beginner trail can be just as rewarding as cresting Mount Marcy for a park veteran. Provide universal-access opportunities for users who are physically challenged.
- **Provide for both the extended-vacation traveler as well as the traveler who just pulled off the Northway for an unplanned drop-in.** Curate an indoor-outdoor Adirondack experience for visitors that only have a few hours to spare.



Challenging growing bodies while providing a different perspective of the forest

## ORIENTATION TOOLS

How do people know where to go? Maps, directions, weather forecasts, packing lists, real-time trail updates, and other tools will help visitors plan their travels and conduct them assuredly and safely. The Adirondack Gateway can provide these orientation and wayfinding tools for visitors. It can also give them face-to-face time with people who know the region and engage and equip them with all the tools they need.

Given the sheer size of the park and the diversity of terrain, it is critical that visitors have accurate and accessible mapping to navigate their journey safely and efficiently. As visitors will be traveling by any number of methods - automobile, foot, horseback, snowmobile, etc. - any mapping interface must reliably work for multi-modal movement.

Inherent with a diverse set of visitors is the multitude of ways that these visitors will capably be able to access directional information. Some visitors have no problem reading and comprehending a plan map while others will find it confusing. A certain sector of users will want a traditional map on paper to carry with them on their journey while others require the real time directions provided by the GPS app on their mobile device. The Adirondack Gateway should offer access to multiple tools for mapping excursions to ensure all users are comfortable with their trip guidance.

Many visitor centers include a large printed map showing the region's recreational amenities and trail routes. We recommend installation of a map in a central location that is immediately accessible to visitors. Additionally, an interactive digital display can engage users with a more detailed map to plan their trip. Digital maps allow users to access a wealth of information that can enrich one's recreational experience far beyond a trail map with lines connecting points A and B.

Once visitors depart from the Hub and embark upon their adventure, additional guidance may be needed. Traditionally, paper maps are provided to users as a convenient take-away guide, and we recommend the continued use of this tool. Printed maps, however, suffer from the same limitations as the static board maps – only so much information can be included on this finite platform. To supplement this, a digital web application could provide similar information with additional detail and trip planning tools. This app could access the mobile device's GPS mapping to reliably guide users to destinations inside the Park.



Above: Digital interactive to find attractions

Left: Local experts may be the best interpretive resource to offer

Some guests will look instead for a more personal guidance from a local with intimate knowledge of the region. Development of a "concierge" desk or staffed location within the Gateway facility can provide critical information with a personal touch. This option can also be mobile, as the Gateway could provide connections to professional guides who can be hired on an individual or group basis to lead excursions.

## INTELLECTUAL ORIENTATION

How do people choose where to go? Getting there is one thing, deciding where to go in the first place is another. This requires a base-level of knowledge about the Adirondacks first. Again, connections with knowledgeable people can be invaluable here. Interactive exhibits and immersive experiences can also be important. Both can raise awareness about the Adirondacks and encourage visitors to discover interests to pursue in the park, the Five Towns, and other interpretive centers.

Destinations and attractions could be thematically, geographically, or otherwise organized, and could provide a dynamic mix of indoor and outdoor experiences that coordinate with geographic orientation. For example, a visitor might discover an interest in Adirondack tree diversity through a climbing structure, interactive wilderness defenders' game, or virtual reality hike experience. Any of these could have a QR or other code to scan that might send "tree destinations" to the visitor's geographic orientation plans. It could also include opportunities to ask a local expert for more information, possibly through a site-specific texting app. Intellectual orientation can begin as early as when one is planning their trip from their own home. To capture as many potential Adirondack Park visitors as possible, the Adirondack Gateway should develop a comprehensive and accessible website.



Interactive digital displays can allow visitors to explore the park in depth and detail



Personal mobile technology allows visitors to continue this level of exploration

## V. RECOMMENDATIONS

# RECOMMENDATIONS

Several key themes emerged from the abundance of data collected during the investigative phase of the project that will guide an informed process for the future design of the Adirondack Gateway. The conclusions will touch upon four points:

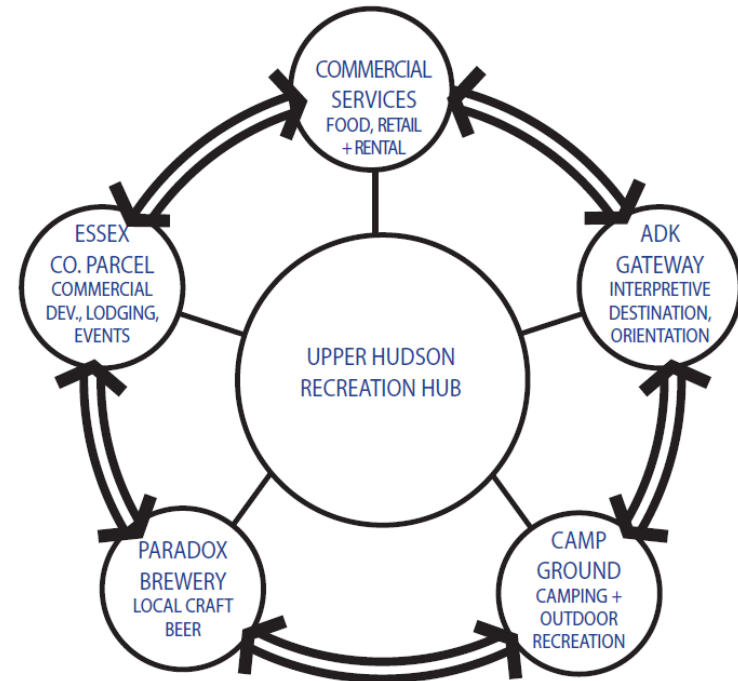
1. clearly communicate a vision for Adirondack Gateway's identity
2. specific to the project's goals, identify a theme(s) that the Gateway interpretation and orientation programs will highlight
3. recommend appropriate sites within the Hub
4. identify the opportunities for integration of visitor interpretive and orientation amenities into the larger Recreation Hub program

## 1) THE IDENTITY OF THE ADIRONDACK GATEWAY IS BOTH A DESTINATION AND A POINT OF DEPARTURE

The Adirondack Gateway will function as both a launching point for recreation AND a destination for interpretation and recreation in this region of the Adirondack Park. The planning team heard this sentiment consistently throughout the stakeholder engagement. Both aspects are intimately connected and not simply two independent programs, but co-existing and integrated programs. The Gateway brand, therefore, will need to reflect a balance between both of these missions; on one level, it must be embedded with sufficient interpretive and recreational amenities as to serve as an attraction in its own right. The Gateway will also need to build upon these interpretive features so visitors can make their experiential connection in the Park environs.

For example, one can envision Gateway visitors learning about the ecological richness and historical significance of the many water corridors that comprise the Upper Hudson watershed through dynamic interpretive exhibitry. These same visitors will then be able to seamlessly connect with a Gateway concierge (real or virtual) that will assist them in securing raft rentals for cruising down Schroon River, so they can experience the subject first-hand. And while this example is very specific, the model can be applied to a wide range of interests and experiences.

One element that should not be a focal characteristic of the Adirondack Gateway's identity is Frontier Town. While there is a small but strong nostalgic following, the themes of this enterprise are outdated and foreign to most contemporary audiences. The campground pays sufficient homage to Frontier Town's legacy on the project site.



The Recreation Hub Concept Diagram: Spokes in a Wheel

## 2) THE ADIRONDACK GATEWAY WILL FEATURE AND PROMOTE LOCAL EXPERIENCES THAT ARE ACCESSIBLE TO ALL

There are many visitor centers and institutions that currently serve Adirondack Park visitors, each with a slightly different focus. However, there are three key characteristics of the Adirondack Gateway that will immediately set it apart from all of these other facilities, especially as a destination for non-traditional visitors:

1. This facility will offer the convenience of direct access off of Interstate 87, a major transportation corridor connecting the 300 miles+ between New York City and Montreal, that most of the other visitor centers do not. Beyond the casual Northway travelers this will capture, this ease of access will be particularly appealing to new visitors unfamiliar with backroads and rural wilderness settings.
2. The Adirondack Gateway will be situated in a dynamic mixed-use setting, offering a blend of amenities and services that are scarce within the larger region. While this will appeal to a broad demographic. New park visitors who lack the experience of preparing for an Adirondack adventure will appreciate the convenience of readily available services and supplies.
3. While visitation rates in this sub-region lag, the Five Towns boast a robust array of natural, cultural, and recreational attractions on par with anywhere else in the park. The relatively unknown character of this area presents a significant opportunity to attract visitors who are looking for more accessible recreation alternatives to the overwhelmed and challenging trails in Keene Valley or the more crowded Lake Placid. These assets present an opportunity to craft an interpretive experience that promotes diversity and inclusion to all visitors regardless of their background or ability. Further supporting this direction is the Gateway's identity as a bridge between interpretive stories and actual experiences.

The challenge for the Gateway is to communicate the many types of experiences in of the Adirondack Park in ways that are new and unexpected, providing deeper, more contextualized insight than has ever been explored before. Creative curation and interpretation will provide relatability to newcomers and veterans alike.



Above: The Adirondacks offer many experiences for all ages, interests, and abilities

### 3) THE TOWN PARCEL AND A-FRAME PARCEL OFFER UNIQUE VISITOR OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN THE GREATER HUB

The A-Frame and Town-owned parcels offer different benefits and drawbacks for future public amenities and visitor services. Future planning should consider the physical opportunities and constraints presented at each site.

#### A-Frame parcel

**Pros:** Proximity to I-87 (visibility and ease of access); existing structure and infrastructure; rich abundance of natural features for interpretation; river access; abundant views to western Adirondacks; private ownership.

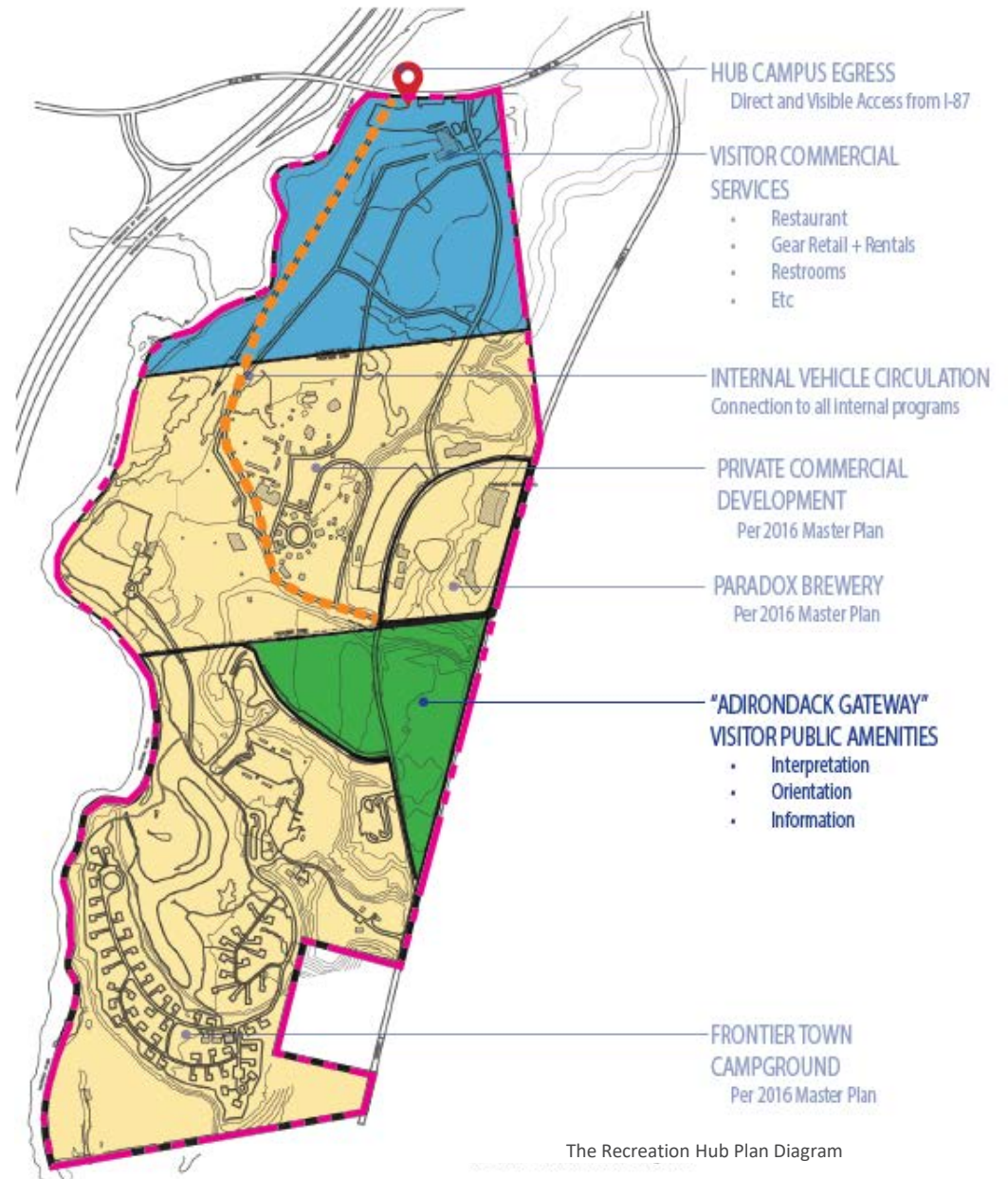
**Cons:** Proximity to I-87 (traffic noise and views); presence of extensive floodplains; rivers and wetlands (and their associated regulatory restrictions); dated infrastructure and significant building restoration needs; poor soils for development; limited proximity to other Hub enterprises.

#### Town parcel

**Pros:** Distance from I-87 (no traffic noise and views); contiguous, level forested environment; access via US Route 9 or via interior roadways; directly adjacent to Frontier Town Campground, Paradox Brewery, and Essex County parcel; limited regulatory restrictions; small creek onsite offers some interpretive opportunities; good soils for development; tree-framed views to western Adirondacks; town-owned.

**Cons:** Distance from I-87 (no visibility for travelers and confusing route to egress); no direct access to Schroon River or wetlands; limited views to western Adirondacks.

The A-Frame parcel may not be entirely suitable for significant interpretive or education amenities as 1) the property is being developed as a private commercial enterprise and 2) the regulatory constraints upon the property may be too restrictive to develop both a planned private commercial enterprise and a visitor facility. Only two, non-contiguous acres of the A-Frame parcel's 50 acres are available for sewage disposal. This, combined with limited available space available for new on-site construction, suggests that there may not be sufficient area available here for both uses. However, the positive attributes that the A-Frame parcel does enjoy are best suited for private commercial services, such as those identified in the owner's business plan.



The Recreation Hub Plan Diagram

The location of these businesses at the Hub threshold is in the best interest for both the financial and overall success of the larger Hub as a whole. The A-Frame parcel may also serve to orient visitors to other educational, interpretive, and informational amenities within the larger Hub.

The physical separation of the Town parcel from the Exit 29 off-ramp makes this property well-suited for future public amenities. Much of the site is level and well-suited for future development, and vehicular traffic and the regulatory constraints are not as limiting as they are at the A-Frame parcel. The forest canopy and the creek add a layer of native ecology that is suitable for inclusion in any outdoor interpretive program. While the site lacks immediate access from the Northway, it has a strong physical connection to the other existing and planned uses within the Hub, including adjacency to the Frontier Town Campground.

Project partners and stakeholders overwhelmingly supported locating commercial activity close to Exit 29 and public amenities within the Hub interior. Future offerings within the Hub should be physically and thematically integrated to support the goals for visitor orientation and education.



Natural woods setting at the Town-owned parcel



The A-Frame parcel

#### 4) THE SUCCESS OF THE ADIRONDACK GATEWAY IS DEPENDENT UPON A COHESIVE AND SYNERGISTIC RELATIONSHIP WITH THE OTHER HUB ENTERPRISES

While the planning of the overall Recreation Hub campus is not a part of this project's scope, it would be opportune for future planning efforts to approach the physical design of the entire site and hub enterprises holistically. The planning team recommends the interpretation, orientation, and information amenities to be located at the Town parcel. The success of this proposal, however, is dependent upon the services and amenities provided by the other Hub enterprises. A consistent message in the engagement feedback was the detrimental impact that the lack of available regional services will have upon the Gateway's prospects, regardless of how compelling the Gateway's interpretive and orientation program may be. Without accessible food, lodging, or retail options, the Hub will struggle to attract visitors. There must be a persuasive argument for tourists to seek all that they are looking for at Exit 29 to make their Adirondack experience incredible, rather than finding it at another destination with the Adirondack Park.

The real promise of the Hub is that it acts as a single destination for visitors to base their exploration of the park, with multiple amenity and service options that appeal to the widest demographic possible. As just one piece of this plan, the Adirondack Gateway amenities will be a major catalyst in attracting visitors to the Hub, especially for visitors who have a strong interest in a unique interpretive experience where they can develop a perspective and knowledge of the Adirondacks unavailable anywhere else. Immediately beyond that, these same visitors will also find an array of support services that can accommodate their specific needs to have a memorable visit. Newcomers to the Adirondack Park can stop at the Gateway to take a deep dive in the Park's stories, get guidance to other attractions in the region continuing these stories, but then also obtain the necessary gear, shelter, and services for their adventure from one of the adjacent equipment retail and rental businesses. Another possibility is that experienced recreationalists travel to visit Paradox Brewery, and while there discover the amenities offered at the Gateway right next door. With the right mix of programs, the possibility for these connections are endless.

Ultimately, the success of all these endeavors will rest in the ability to market the entire Upper Hudson Recreation Hub as a single, identifiable destination, comprised of a collection of world-class amenities and businesses.

It is difficult to envision this now with individual elements under development, but a robust and diverse program presented under an umbrella known as "the Adirondack Gateway" will appeal to the broadest constituency.

Physical planning of the Hub campus can help reinforce this singular identity. One measure already discussed is the location of a dynamic collection of commercial services at the front door to the campus, complete with an (existing) iconic piece of architecture. This would certainly act as a magnet for Northway travelers as envisioned, while also serving as the center of commerce for patrons utilizing the other Hub amenities. Another physical improvement that can tie the campus together is locating a central access road at the A-Frame parcel; starting immediately off Exit 29, then winding through the Essex County parcel, before terminating at Frontier Town Road. This can act as the Hub's Main Street, connecting visitors directly to all the services and amenities within, thus eliminating the need to travel the circuitous route around Blue Ridge Road to US Route 9.



Rendering of the Paradox Brewery, opened in 2019

## VI. APPENDIX

# APPENDIX A: HISTORIC CONTEXT

## HISTORY IN THE FIVE TOWNS REGION

The earliest records of human habitation date back to 10,000 BC, following the settlement of North America. The Algonquian peoples and the Mohawk nation used the Adirondacks for hunting and travel but did not settle.

The character of the area is extensively hilly and rocky, with deep valleys forged by extensive waterways and pristine lakes. The landscape has a thick cover of northern conifer hardwoods forests. Due to the lack of arable land, the predominant area industries have historically focused on logging, mineral extraction and leather tanning.

Water has always been a defining feature of the area. Specifically, the Five Towns (North Hudson, Minerva, Newcomb, Long Lake, Indian Lake) lay within the Upper Hudson Watershed, the origins of the mighty Hudson River springing just north of Newcomb. The areas rivers have provided the game hunted by the regions earliest inhabitants, it made possible transit into some of the most remote wilderness areas, and it fueled the earliest industries.

Due to the difficulty traversing the challenging topography, European settlement was relatively slow. Following the Revolutionary War, control of the area was ceded to New York State. Needing to discharge war debts, the state sold this (and much of the public lands upstate) for pennies on the acre.

During the first half of the 19th century, the population of the region grew rapidly with settlers seeking a piece of the burgeoning timber or mining industries. Following the civil war, with a good deal of the area deforested and access to the region cost-prohibitive, the population began a steady decline that continues until today.

## HISTORY OF NORTH HUDSON

Established in 1848, North Hudson is the second largest town in Essex County. The town is bifurcated by two branches of the Schroon River, converging at the northwest corner of the Upper Hudson Recreation Hub site and then flowing south to Schroon Lake and eventually out to the Hudson River.

The first permanent European settler arrived in 1800 and those that followed tended to make their homes along the eastern branch of the Schroon River. As can be



Lower Ausable Pond (Source: The Getty Museum)



Timber floating along the Boreas River (Source: Sun Community News Website)



Skinning Hemlock bark to fuel the tanning industry

imagined, the river played an essential role in early town industry; hydro-power fed mills of every kind from grist to saw mills, while timber was transported down-stream to bustling markets to the south, giving rise to the local logging industry. Over time, the logging industry was hampered by its own success when supplies of valuable pine was exhausted. Another tree that grew in abundance and was valuable to the local economy was Hemlock, the bark of which is used as a preservative in transporting animal hides on their way to processing to leather, thus spurring a successful tanning market in North Hudson.

Hospitality has also played a role in North Hudson's economy since its early existence. A major wagon road connecting Albany to Canada ran directly through town, supporting a robust hotel and tavern industry. It is reported that as many as 40 teams would patronize North Hudson's businesses in a single day, which must have generated quite the boom town atmosphere.

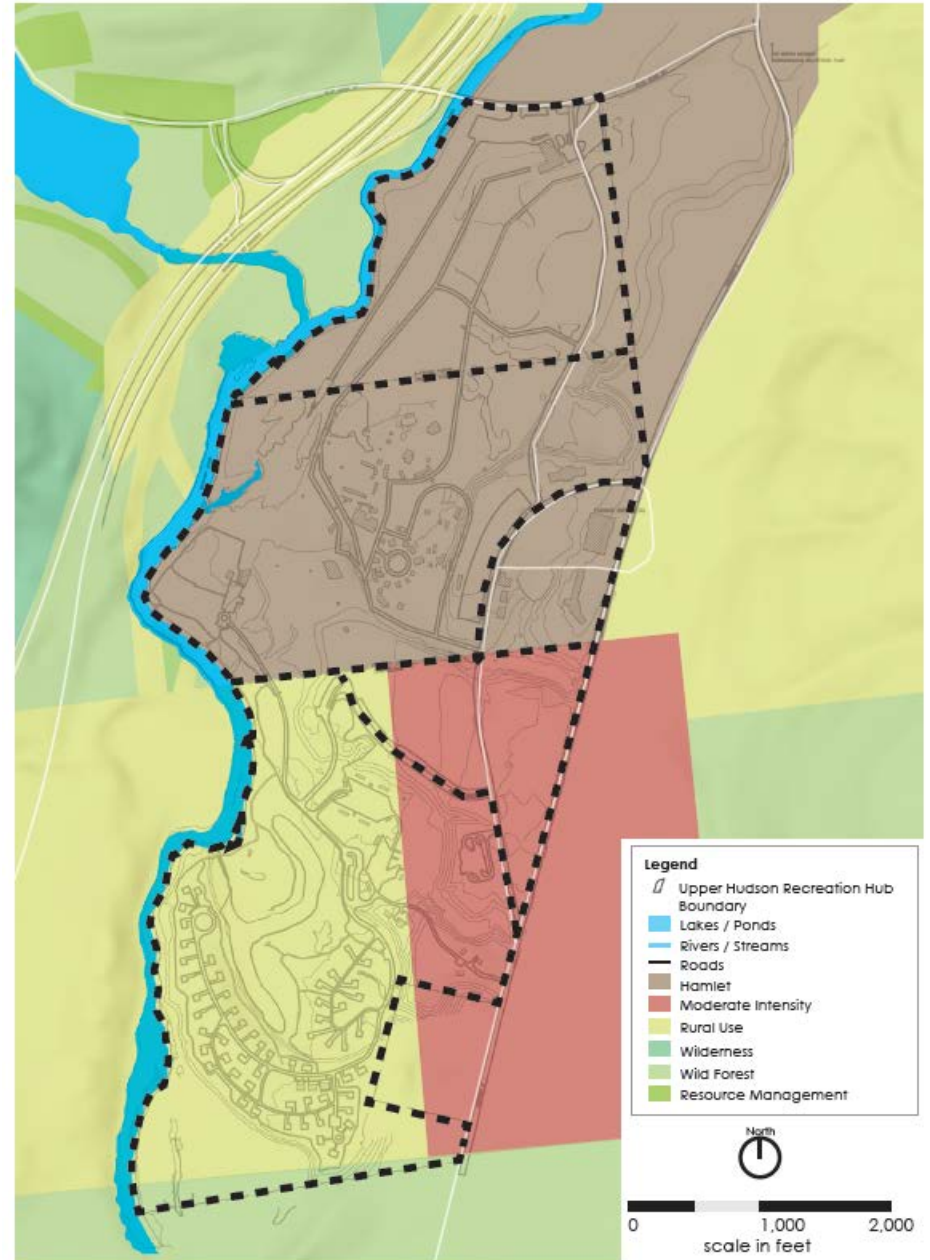


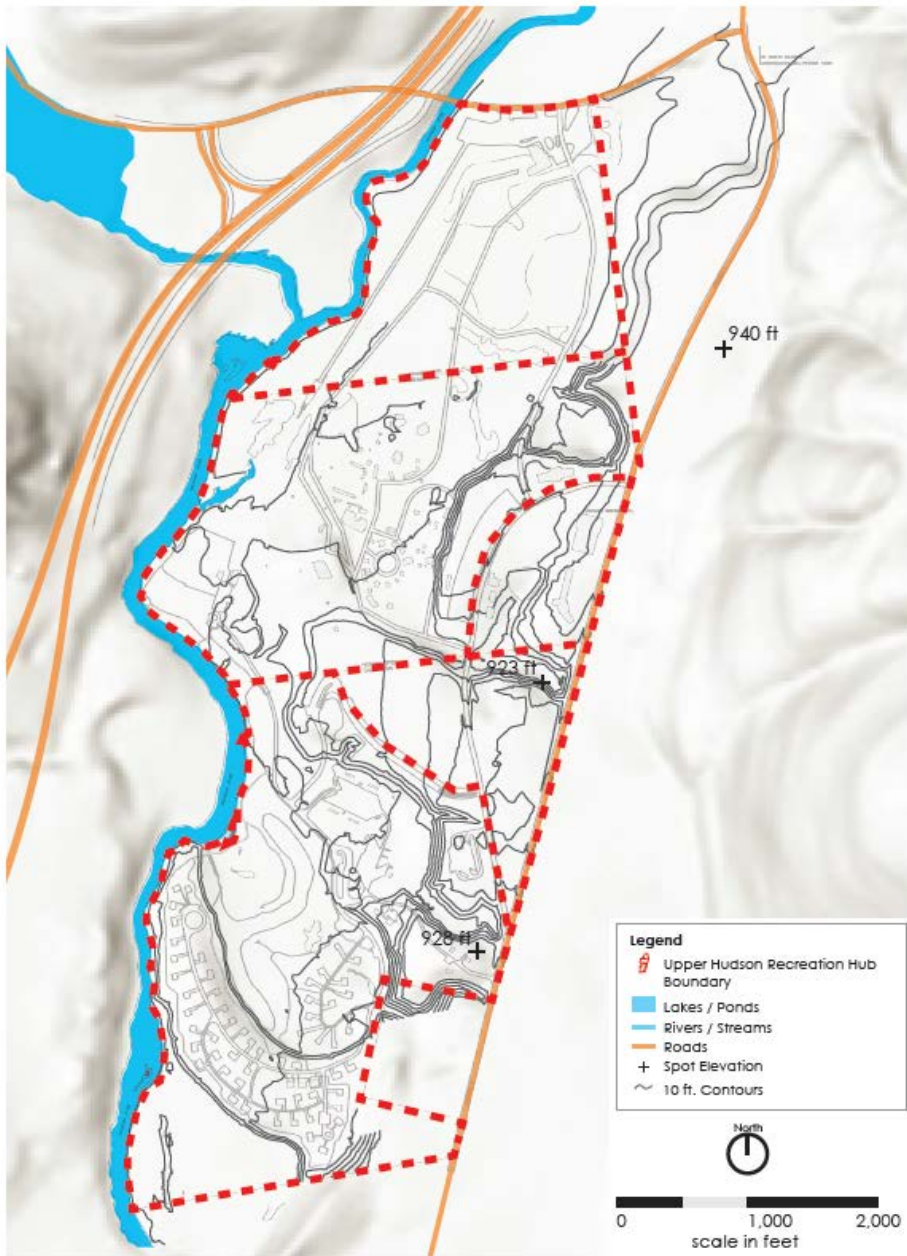
The establishment of the Adirondack Forest Preserve (58% of the town's land is part of the preserve) combined with the arrival of the Route 9 and Interstate 87 transit corridors, much of the local economy evolved from these historic resource-dependent industries to the service establishments catering to tourists. Naturalists and recreationalists pass through or linger in North Hudson to enjoy the bountiful wilderness provided by the Adirondack Park. For several decades, North Hudson was home to a popular theme park "Frontier Town" that both celebrated an idealized version of the American West, while also featuring locally-relevant attractions such as a working sawmill and forge. The family-friendly content of the theme park was a draw for visitors across the northeastern United States and supported a healthy service industry reflective of mid-century automobile-centric tourism, consisting of motels, restaurants and gas stations. However, with the eventual decline of Frontier Town and the lure of visitors to more picturesque (authentic) corners of the Adirondack Park, North Hudson has seen a steady drop in both its visitation numbers and permanent population.

# APPENDIX B: SITE INVENTORY

## LAND USE

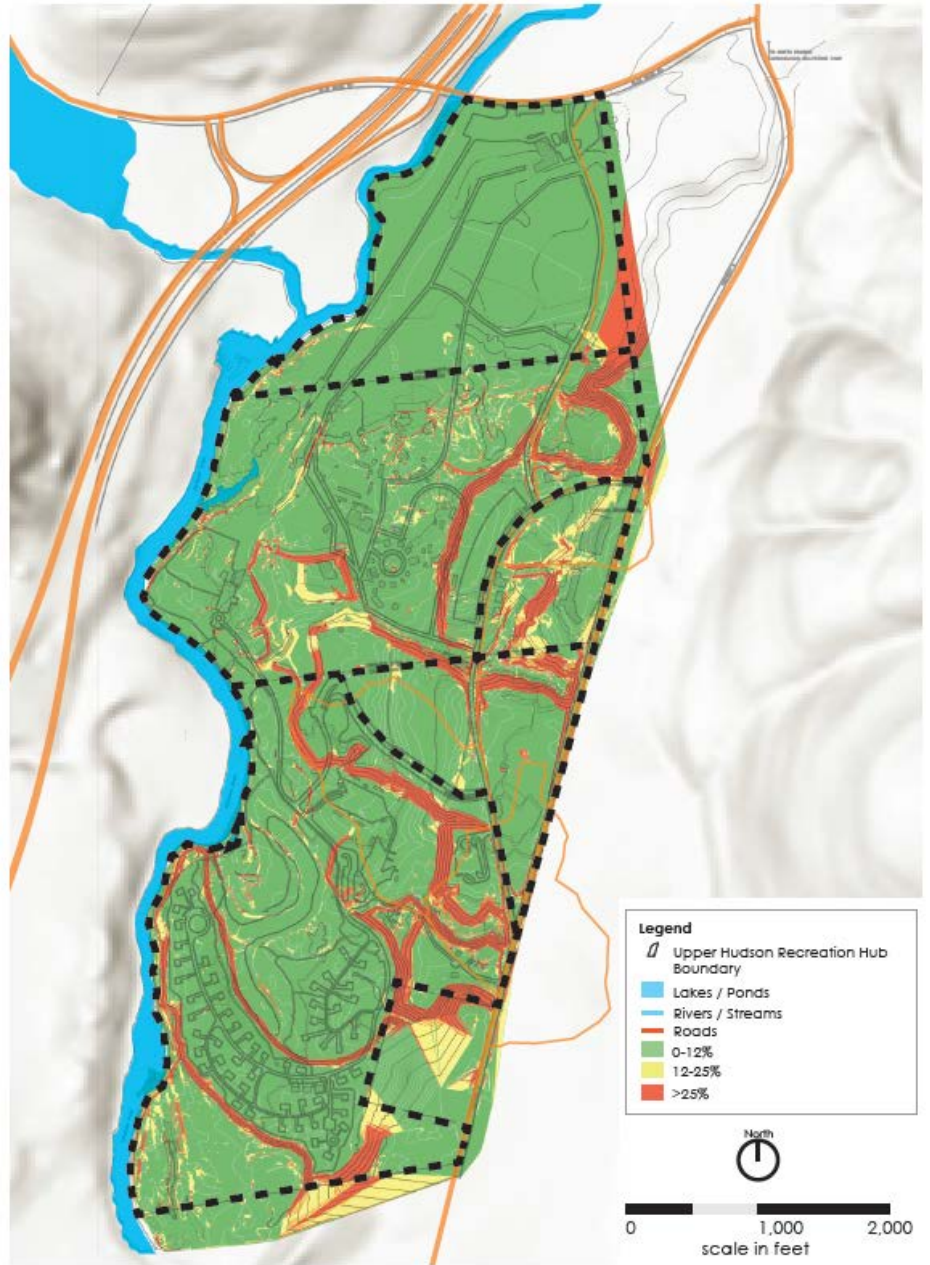
Four Land Use designations make up the entirety of the Hub site. The land uses are, as follows: Hamlet (Hamlet of North Hudson), Moderate Intensity (most uses are permitted; relatively concentrated residential development is most appropriate), Rural Use (most uses are permitted; residential uses and reduced intensity development that preserves rural character is most suitable), and a small amount of Wild Forest (State of New York). From a planning perspective, all site locations are suitable for most uses, with the exception of the State Wild Forest on the south side of the site.





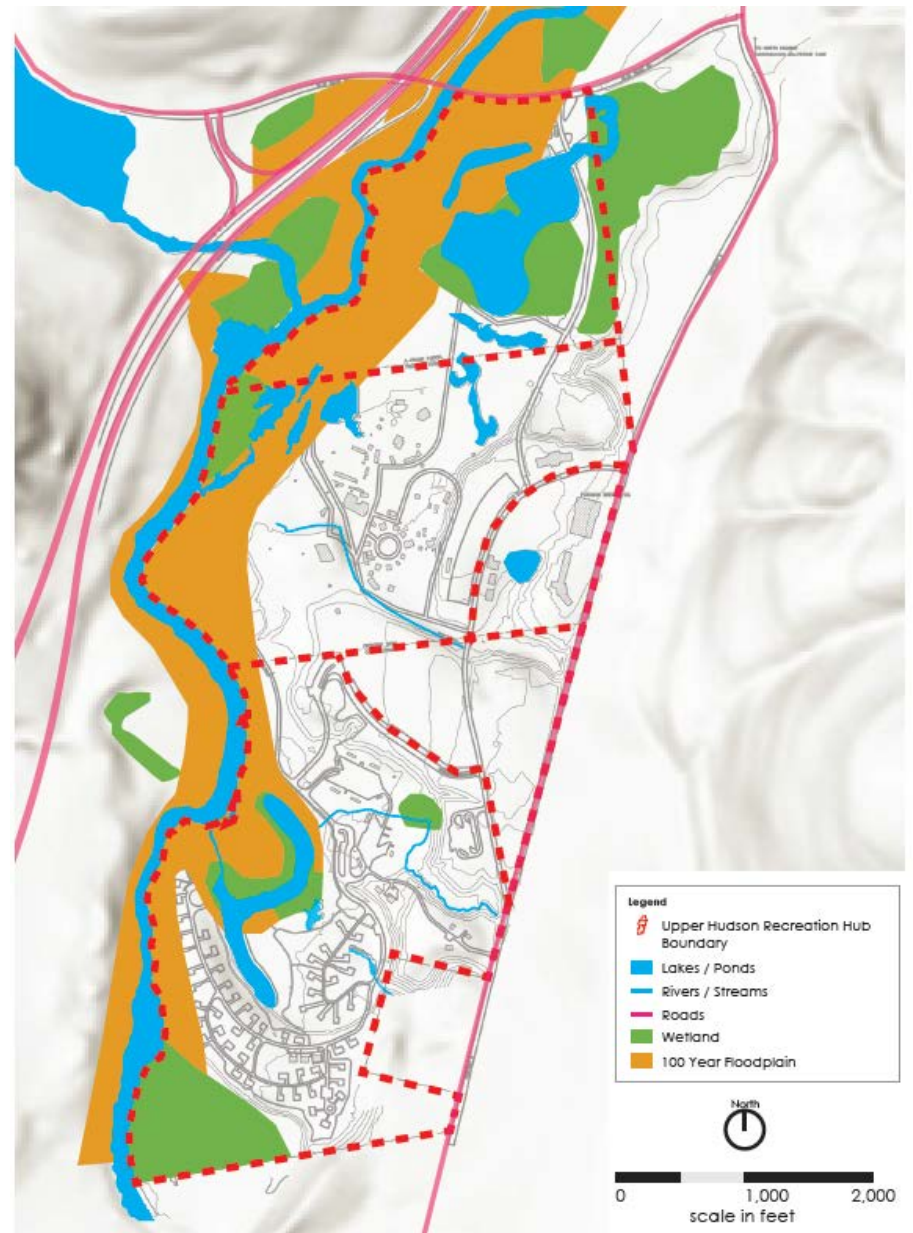
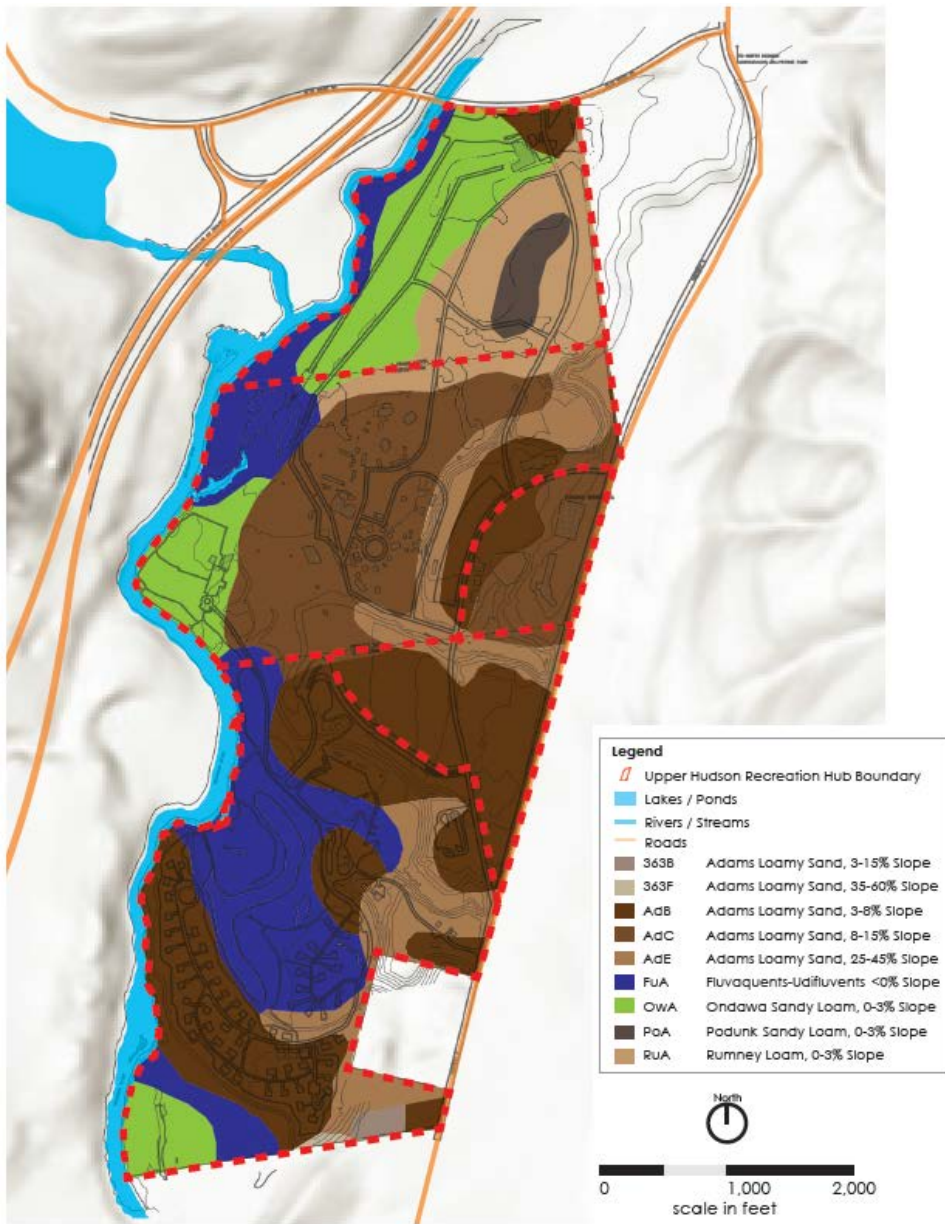
## TOPOGRAPHY

A combination of gentle slopes and dramatic landforms encompass the Hub site. The Hub site varies from 840-845 ft. to 920-930 ft. above sea level from the eastern banks of Schroon River to US Route 9, respectively.



## SLOPE

Slope determines suitability for site infrastructure development. Favorable development locations include areas that are 0-12%. Carefully sited development at a lesser density is possible in 12-25% areas. Areas over 25% are not suitable for development.

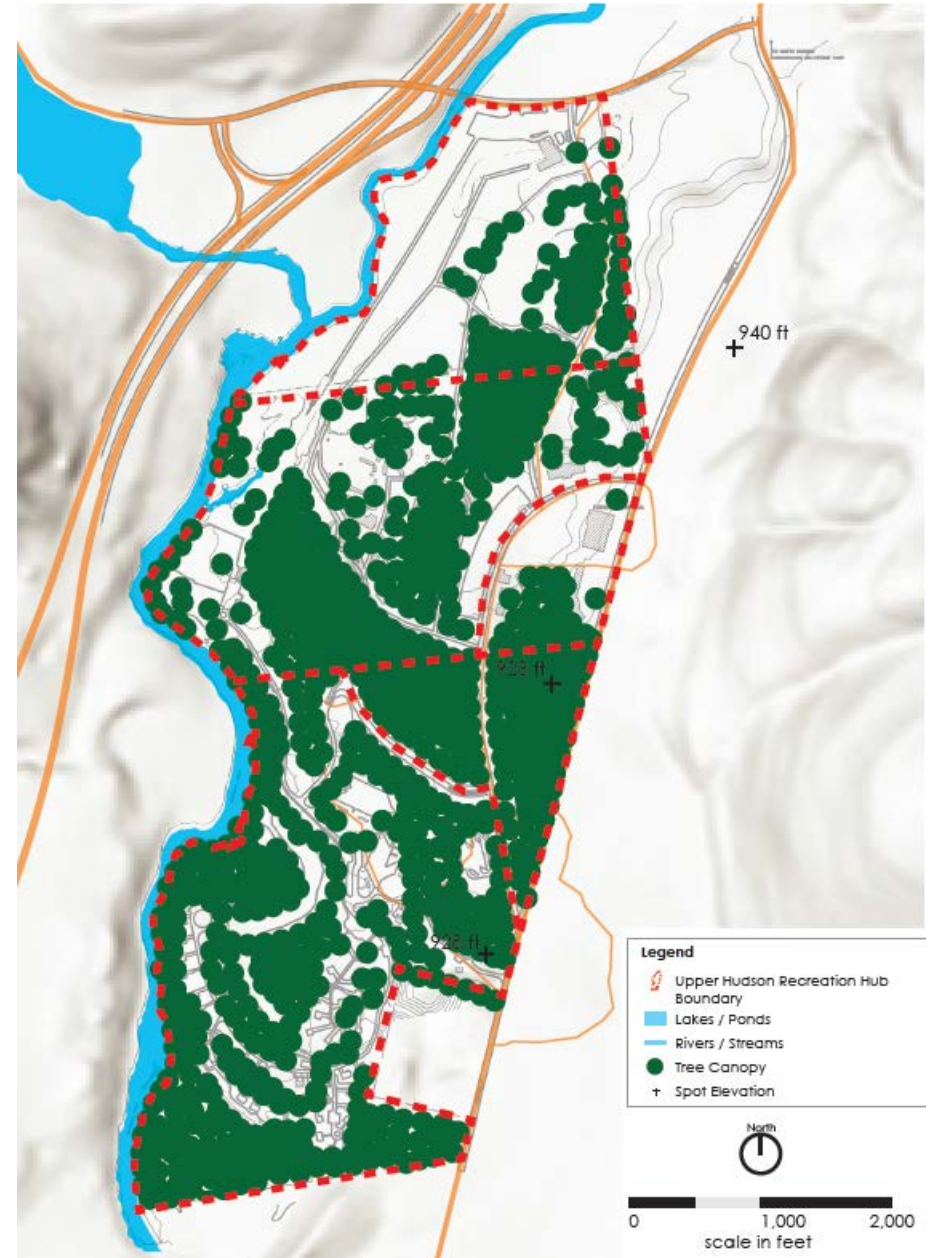
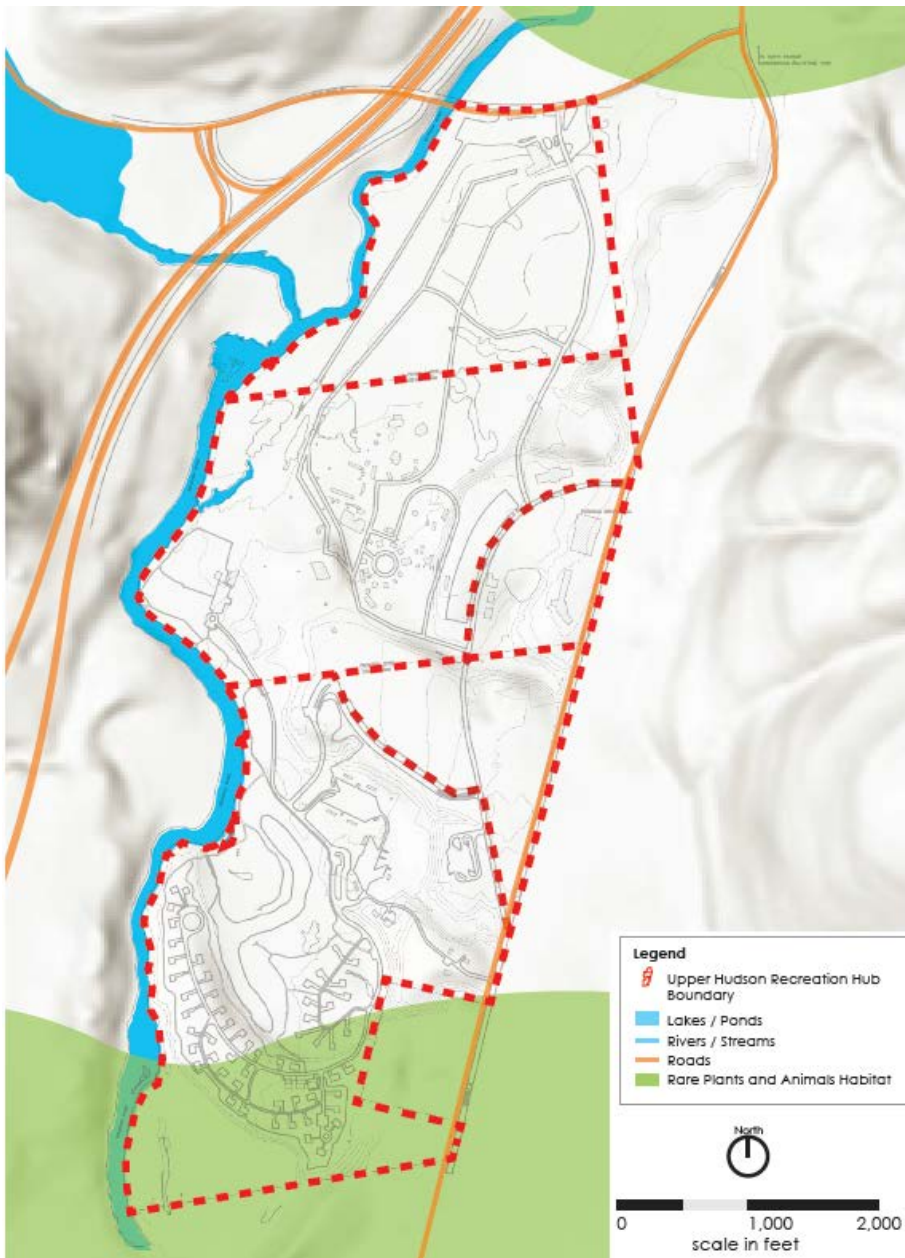


## SOILS

The soils most suitable for development are Ondawa Sandy Loam and Podunk Sandy Loam, as they are well-drained and were used primarily for farmland. Adams Loamy Sand is moderately suitable for development. Fluvaquents-udifuvents Complex and Rumney Loam flood frequently and are unsuitable for development.

## HYDROLOGY

Currently, stormwater drains into neighboring wetlands or into the Schroon River. Tributary streams, ponds, and wetlands are scattered across the project site. As a result, natural water features provide scenic and recreational opportunities.

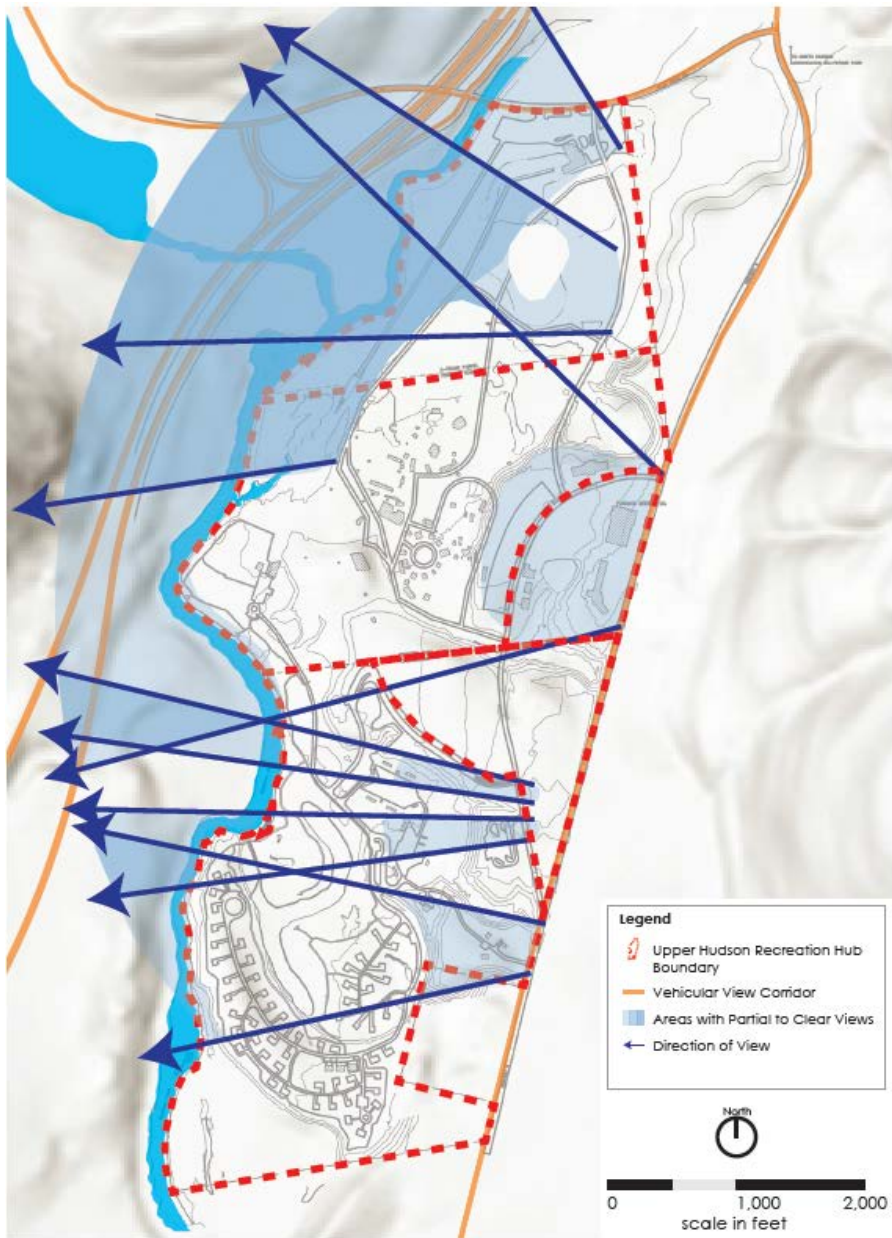


## ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

Endangered, threatened, or rare plants or animals inhabit the highlighted green locations. The north location is home to the Bridle Shiner, an endangered species of minnow, originally from Canada. The Bridle Shiner is native to 16 of 18 watersheds, but are declining in population in western and central watersheds, which includes the lower Hudson watershed. The southern-most area also includes plant species designated as endangered or rare by New York State.

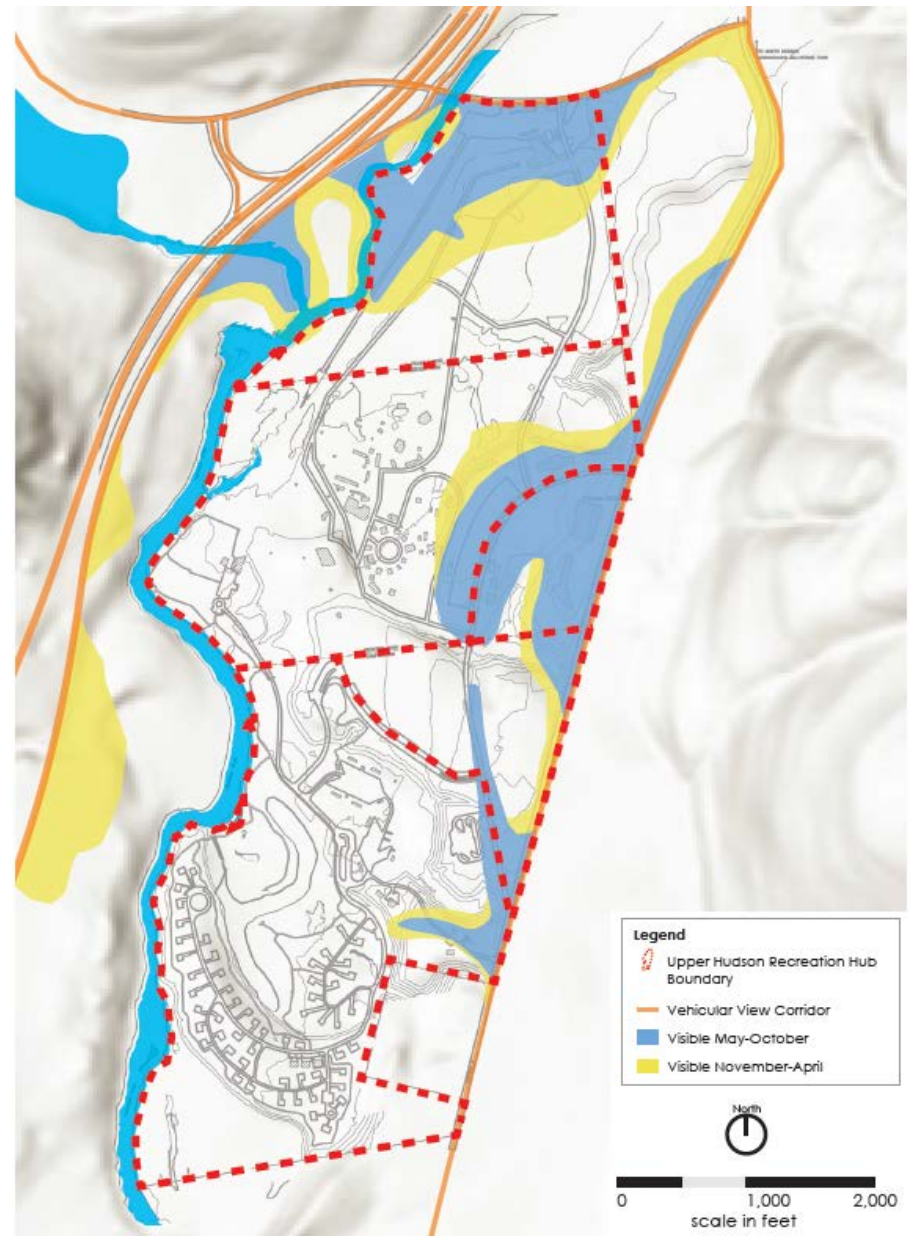
## TREE CANOPY

From the banks of the Schroon River to the edge of US Route 9, four major vegetative communities exist on the Hub site. The communities include: Hardwood- Conifer (Mixed Woods), Lowland Conifer (Spruce Flat), and Conifer Swamp (Spruce Swamp). Red Spruce, Balsam Fir, Eastern Hemlock, Red Map, Yellow Birch, Black Spruce, and Tamarack dominant these ecological communities.



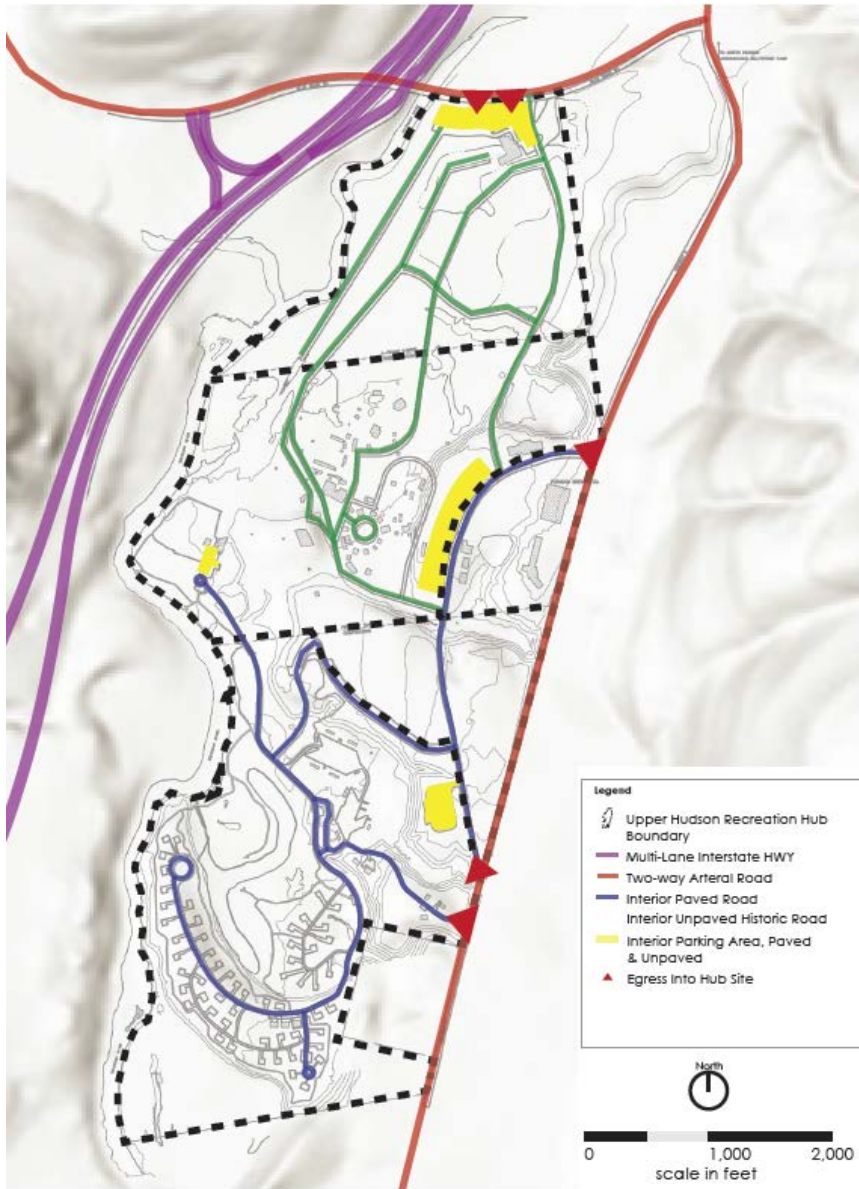
## EXTERIOR VIEWSHED

From several points on the site, unique opportunities exist to experience the magnificent views of the surrounding Adirondack Mountains, especially while looking westward. As one moves closer to the Schroon River, water and rugged rock formations are visible.



## INTERIOR VIEWSHED

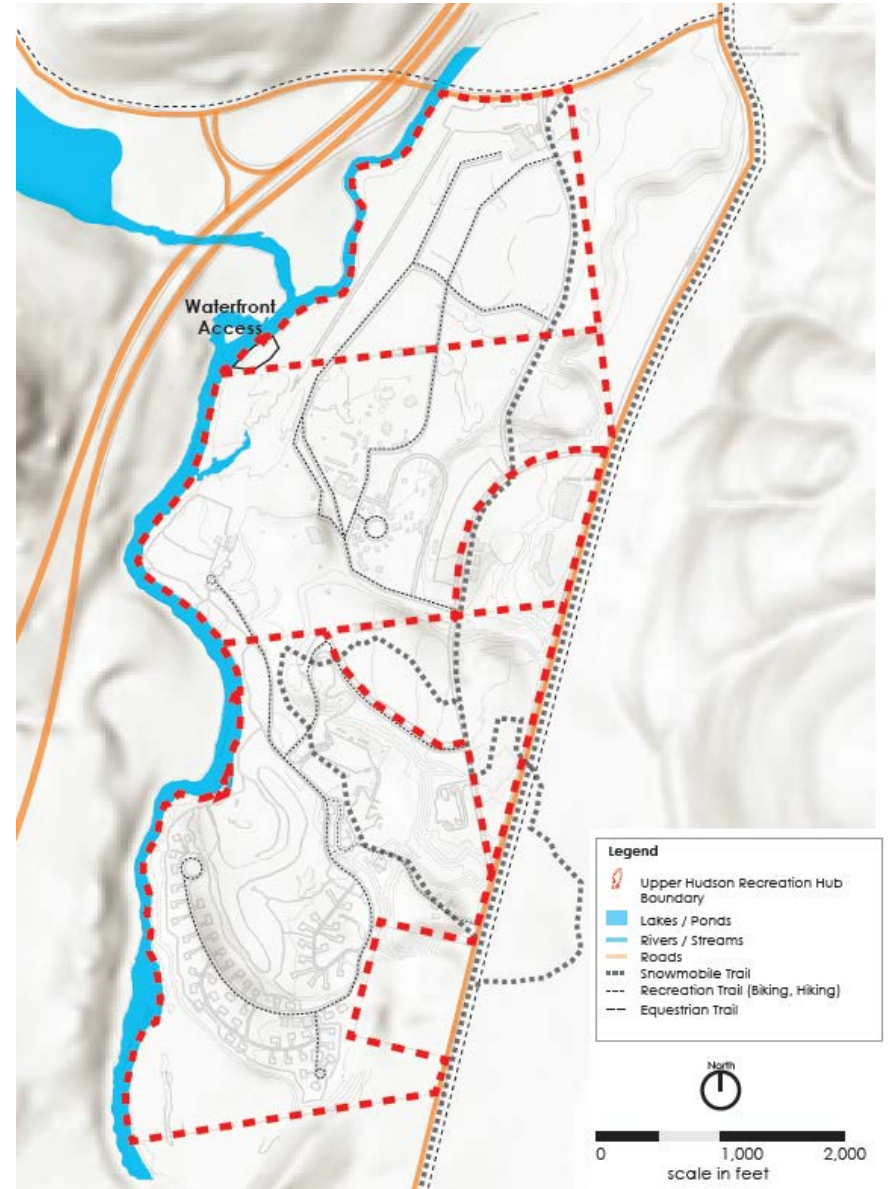
The views towards the interior of the site vary from season to season, especially once leaves start to fall. Along Blue Ridge Road, there are far-sighted views into the site, especially near the A-Frame parcel. As one drives along US Route 9, one will experience a range of views, including the site interior near Paradox Brewery. Views from Interstate 87 are most encapsulated at the confluence of the Branch and Schroon River.



## SITE CIRCULATION

As one travels along Interstate 87 and exits onto Blue Ridge Road, there are two egresses into the northern section of the site. The egresses provide access to the A-Frame building as well as a parking lot and multiple unpaved historic roads.

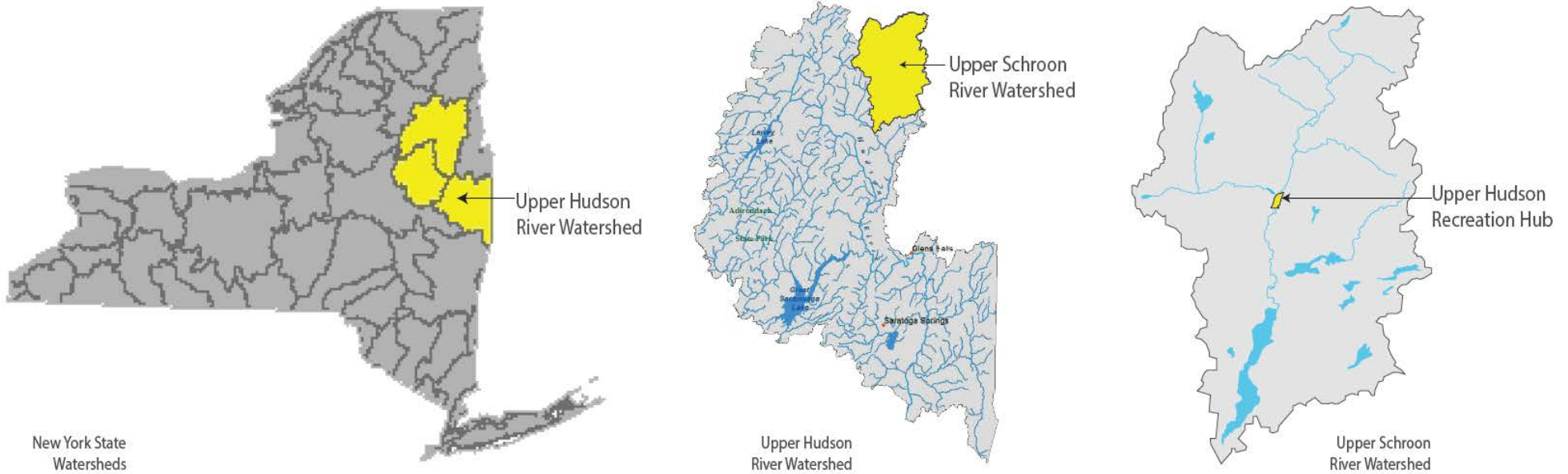
If one continues to travel east and heads south on US Route 9, there are three additional egresses. The first of them falls at the paved entrance to Paradox Brewery. The second and third of the egresses are at the entrance to the Frontier Town Campground, which lead to additional paved road access to the various campsites and multi-purpose trails.



## RECREATION CONNECTIONS

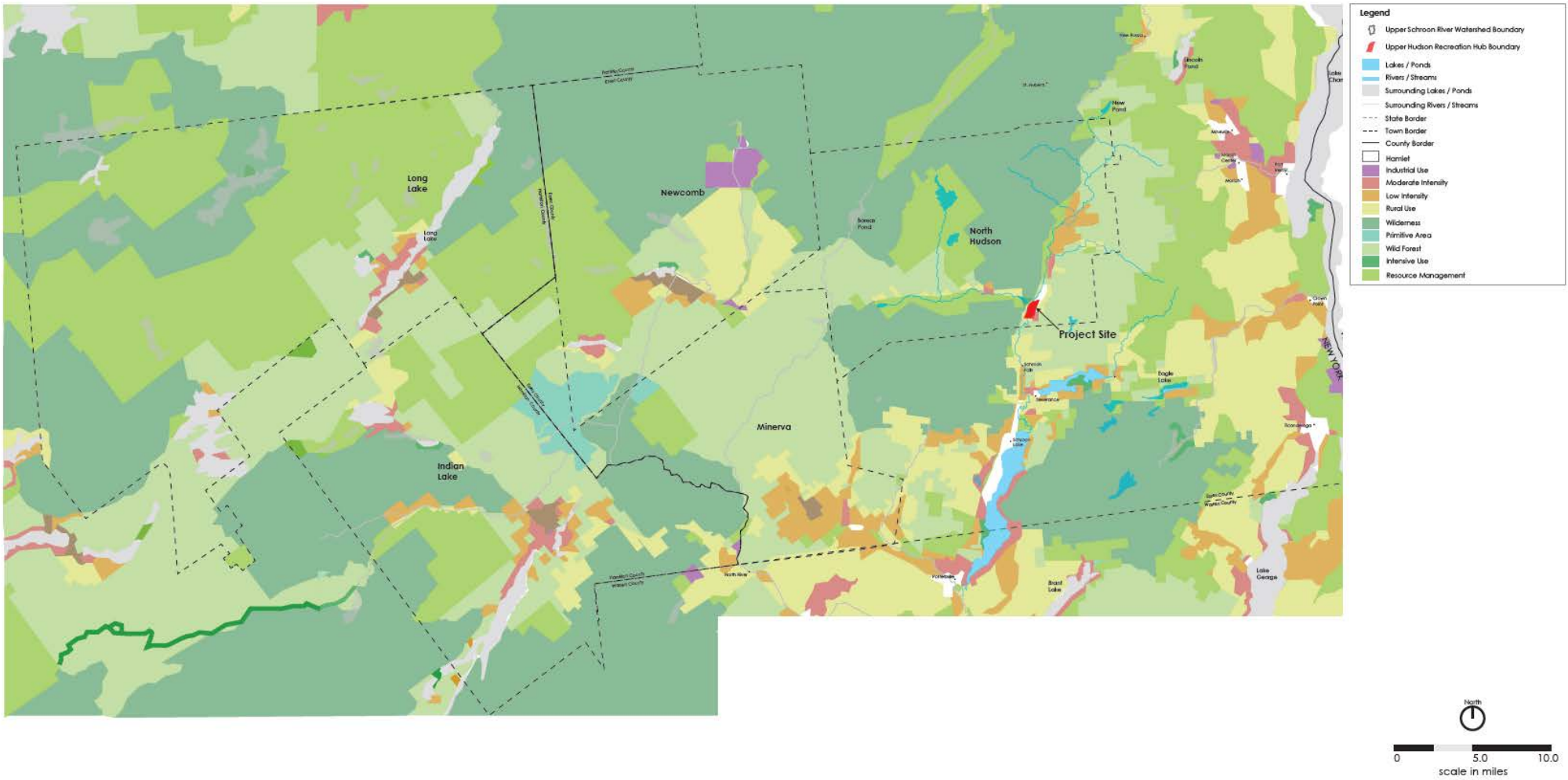
There is a network of multi-purpose trails for hiking, biking, snowmobiling, and equestrian use surrounding the site. There are also locations for waterfront access along the Schroom River.

# APPENDIX C: REGIONAL INVENTORY



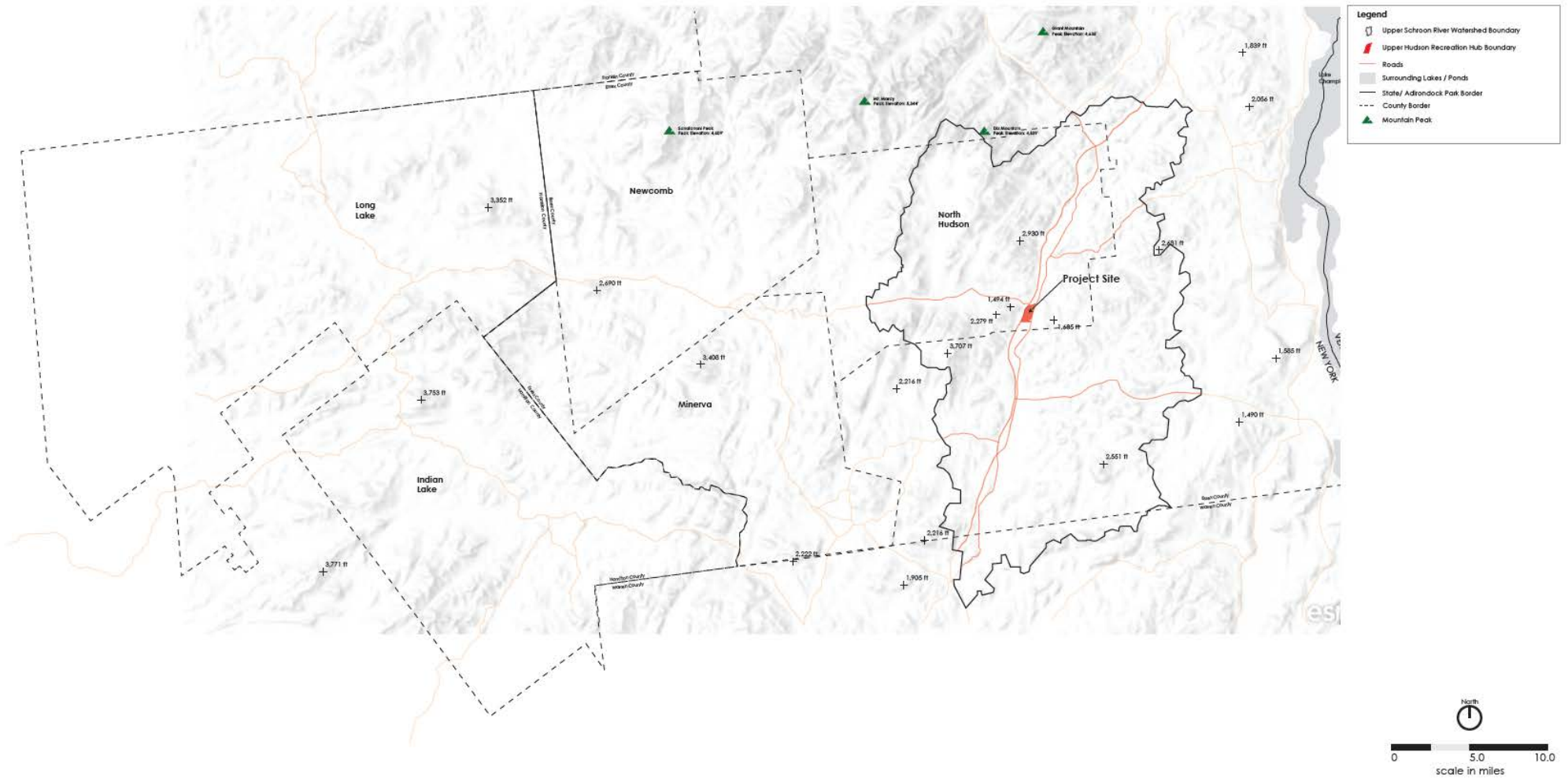
## HYDROLOGICAL CONTEXT

While relatively remote, the project site has a hydrological connection to major water bodies. The Upper Schroom River Watershed is a link in a network of watersheds anchoring the eastern section of New York State. Starting 15 miles north of Schroom Lake is the north branch of the Schroom River (which defines the western edge of the project site), flowing through the lake and into a south branch of the Schroom River, eventually feeding the Hudson River and leading to an ultimate connection with the Atlantic Ocean. The direct connection of the site to the Schroom River means that any impacts to the river system from the project site can have far-reaching effects.



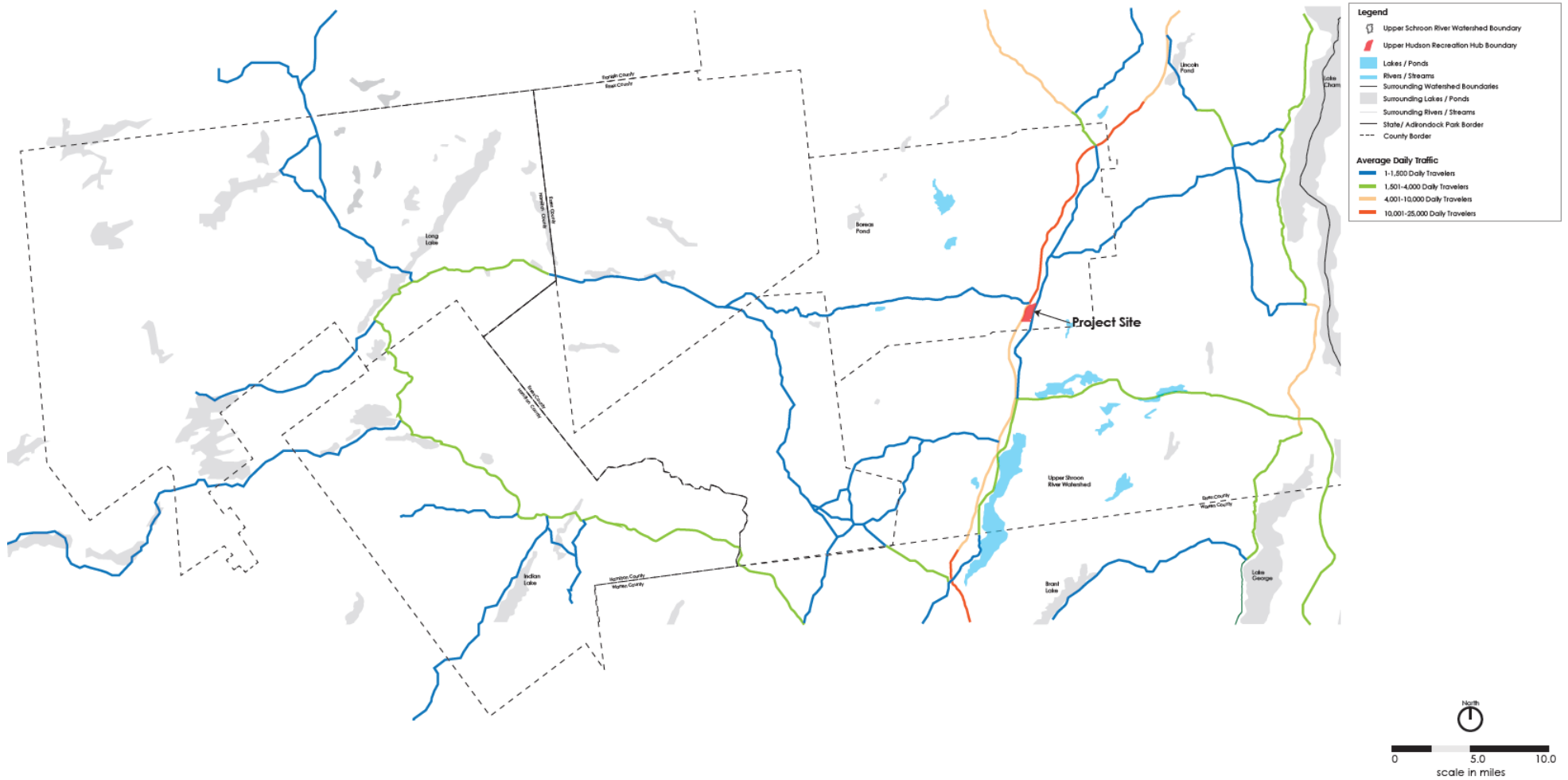
## LAND USE

Courtesy of the Adirondack Park Land Classification map, as of March 21, 2018 the study area is situated among various land uses, including an abundance of wild forest and wilderness. Additionally, the surrounding areas have similar land use relationships, which provides an ideal experience for visitors. Exploring opportunities to develop a Visitors Interpretive Center in the study area appears favorable as the project goals seek to kickstart the visitor experience.



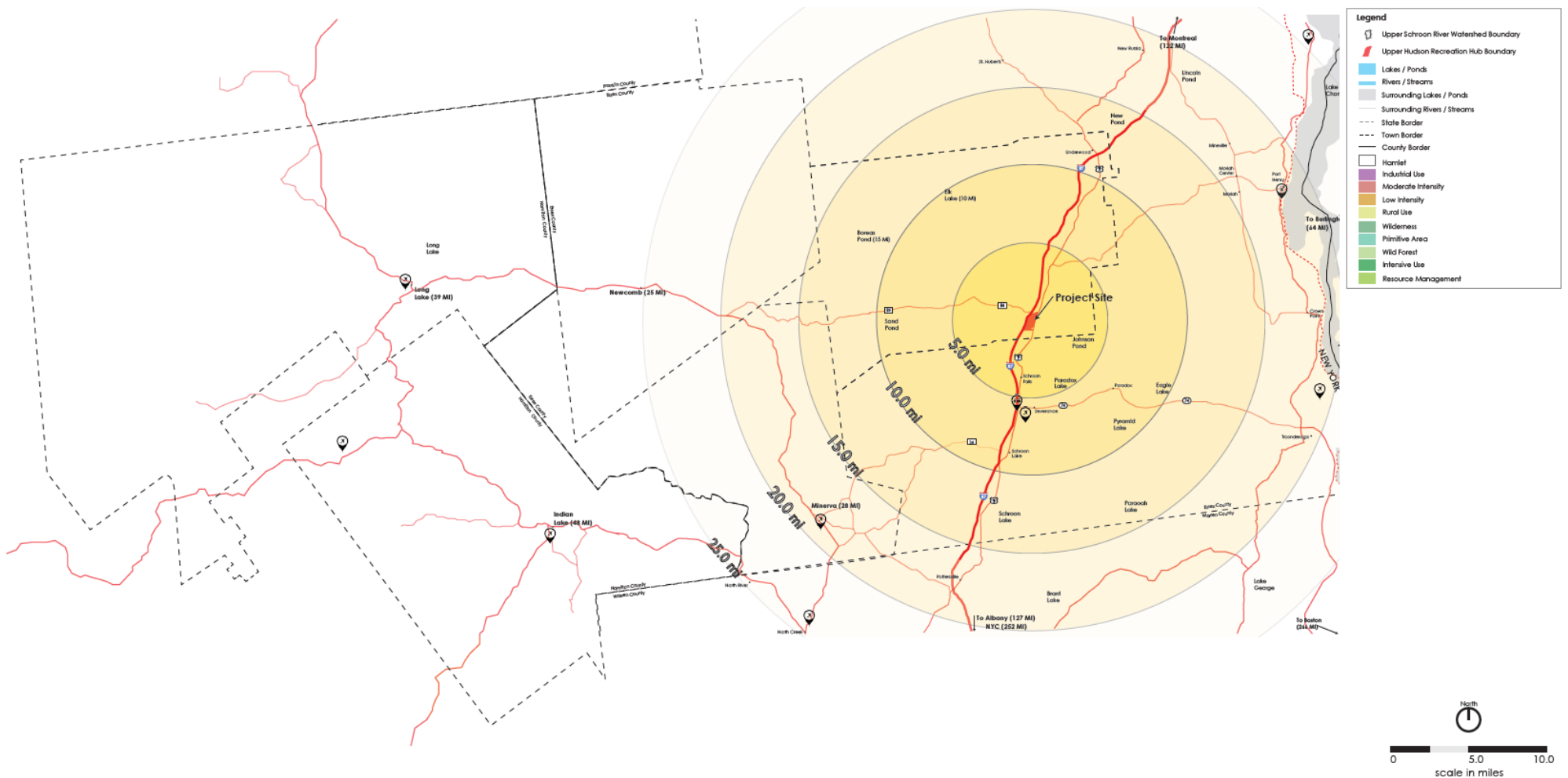
## TOPOGRAPHY

The study area resides within the foothills of the central Adirondack Mountains providing an opportunity to connect lowland visitors to highland locations. Visitors of the Adirondack Park experience a wide range of elevation change across the region. With Dix Mountain, Giant Mountain, Mt. Marcy, and Santanoni Peak all within range of the project site, it is opportune to locate the Adirondack Gateway in North Hudson for visitors interested in hiking the nearby wilderness areas.



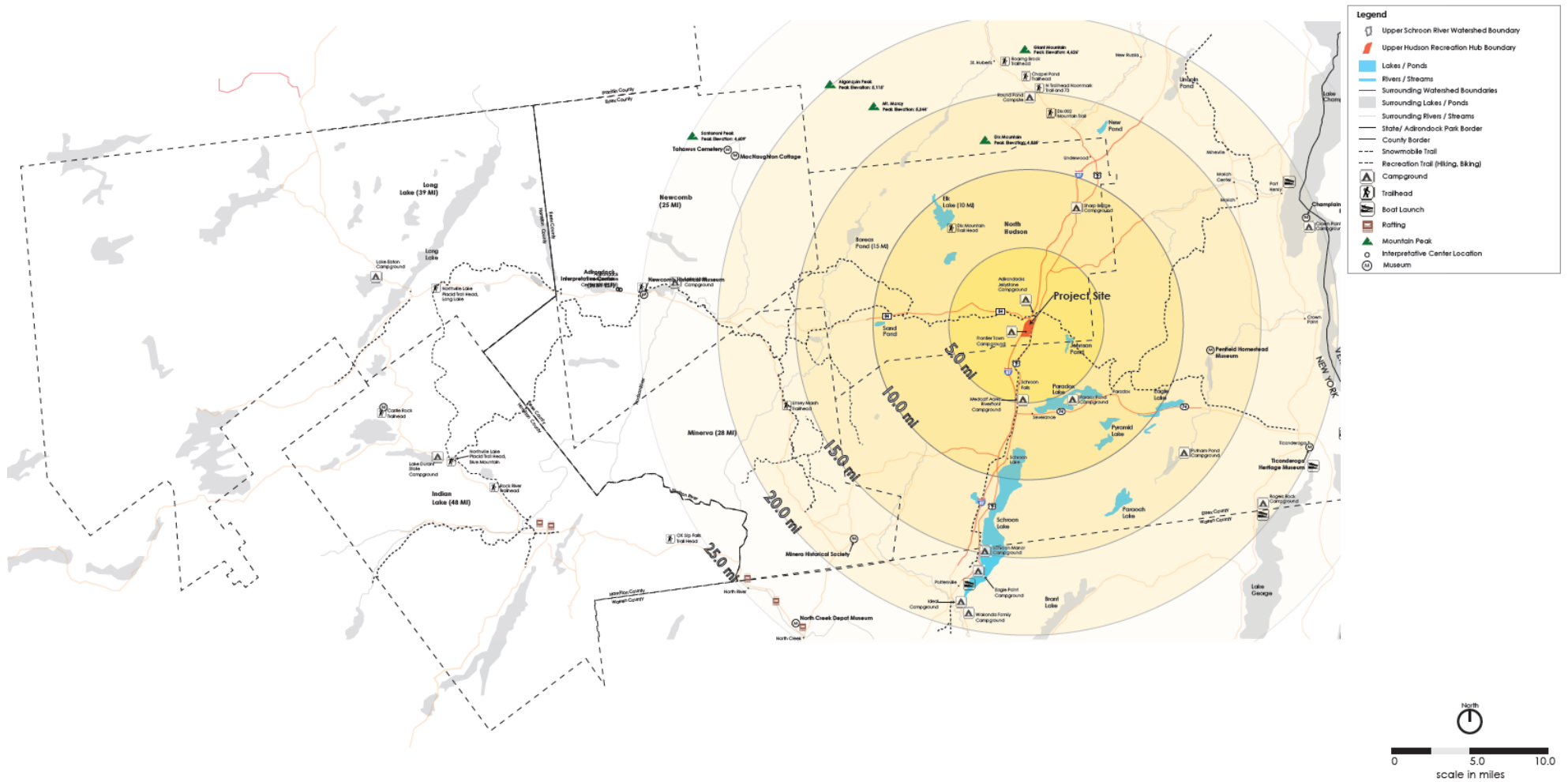
## TRAFFIC CORRIDORS

This traffic study showcases the amount of travelers on each of the roadways throughout the Upper Hudson Watershed. On average, 4,001 to 25,000 daily travelers travel throughout the Schroon River Watershed on Interstate-87 (highlighted in yellow/orange). Compared to other parts of the Upper Hudson Watershed, Interstate-87 provides an existing traffic flow that will support the placement of tourism amenities.



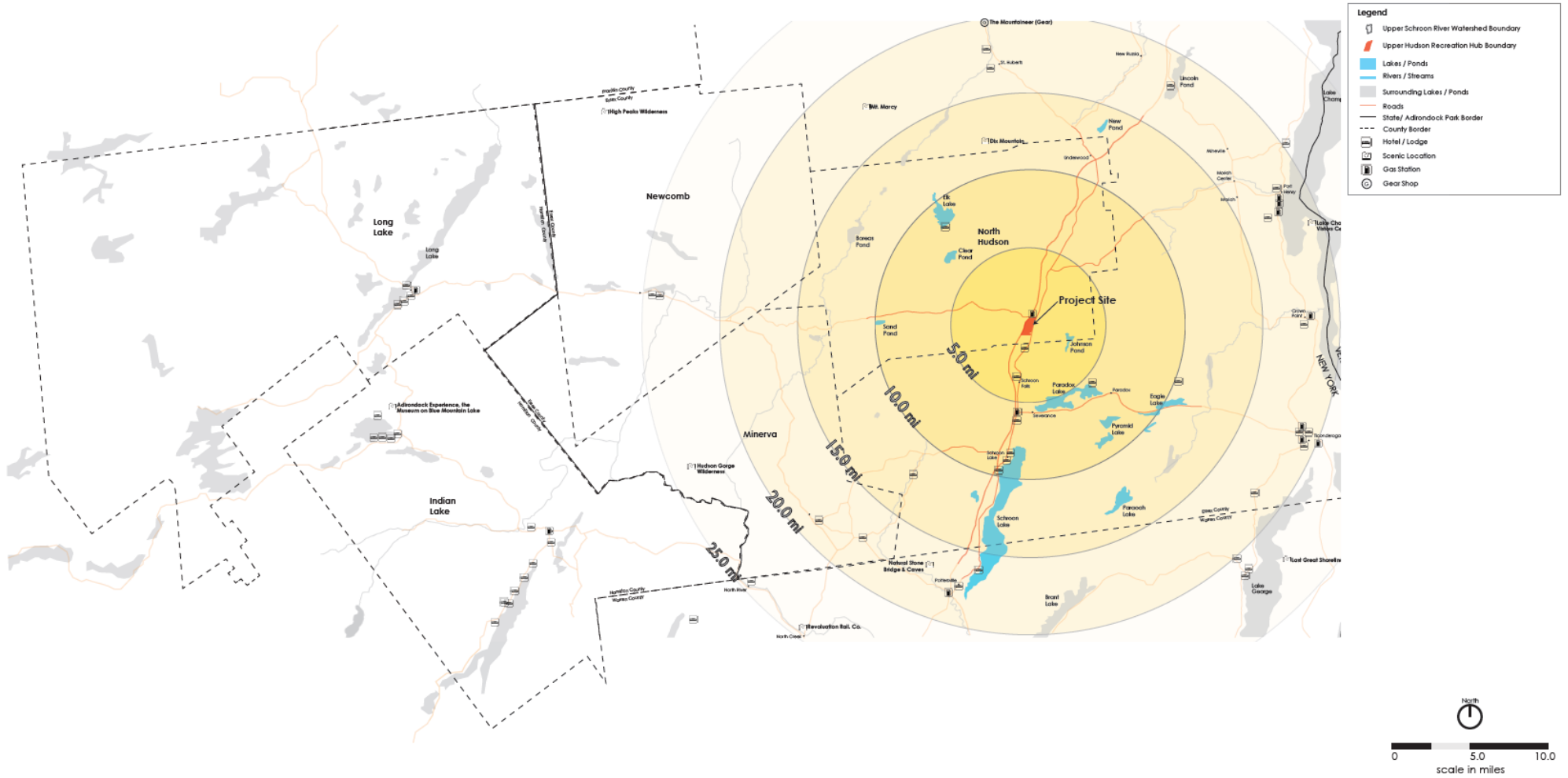
## TRANSIT CONNECTIONS

Located on the edge of the Central Adirondack Mountains, the study area provides multiple transportation routes throughout the region. Major roadways through the Upper Hudson Watershed are Interstate-87 and US Route 9. Secondary roadways provide connections to neighboring towns and their respective amenities. Three out of five townships, at the extent of Newcomb and Minerva, are within a 25-mile radius of the study area. Just beyond those limits to the west are Long Lake and Indian Lake. A more scenic route runs along the west shore of Lake Champlain, and there is an Amtrak train route that is within 20 miles of the project site.



## RECREATION CONNECTIONS

From mountain campgrounds to lowland water trails, the study area provides multiple avenues for exploration. Across the regional context, a visitor will encounter 15 campgrounds, 12 major trailheads, 4 boat launches, and 5 mountain peaks. Within 25 miles of the study area, a visitor will find 13 campgrounds, 7 major trailheads, 2 boat launches, and 5 mountain peaks.



## HOSPITALITY CONNECTIONS

With over 49 hotels and lodge locations, visitors can explore the Adirondacks at their own leisure and comfort levels. There are approximately 24 lodging locations within 25 miles of the project site. There are 10 museums in the region, including the Penfield Homestead Museum, Revolution Rail Co., North Creek Depot Museum, Newcomb Historical Museum, and many more. However, there are limited gas stations within the region.

# APPENDIX D: EXISTING BUILDING INVENTORY

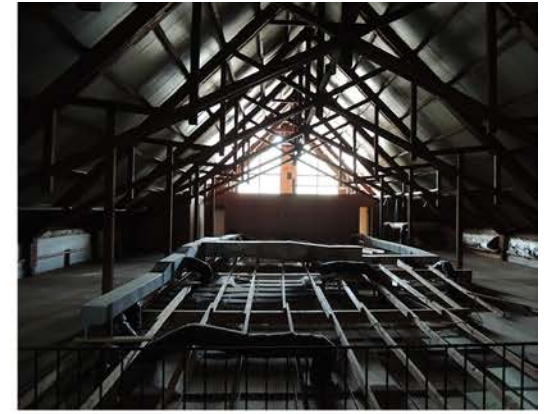
## A-FRAME AREA



1.1 A



1.1 B



1.1



1.1 D



1.1 E



1.1 F

### 1.1 A-FRAME BUILDING

150'x150'

GLULAM + TRUSS CONSTRUCTION

The building consists of three distinct structural framing systems, glulam framing, large span scissor trusses, and wood stud bearing walls with shed roofs. The large A-Frame portion of the building that runs parallel to Blue Ridge Road is built from large glulam members running to a single ridge beam at the peak. The majority of these members look to have minimal structural decay but there is one member that is severely decayed due to water damage. The portion of the building that is perpendicular to Blue Ridge Road is built with wood stud bearing walls and large scissor trusses. The main structure of this section appears to have minimal structural decay as well. The smaller roof additions on both the east and west sides of the scissor trusses are built with wood framed shed roofs and are collapsing or have collapsed.

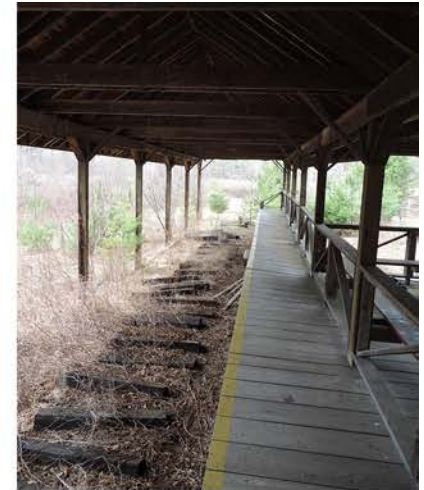
## A-FRAME AREA



1.2 A



1.2 B



1.2 C

### 1.2 STAGE LINE BUILDING

50'X40'

POST AND BEAM CONSTRUCTION

This building was the original loading area for a train that carried recently arrived visitors into Frontier Town. The main structure of this buildings is post and beam construction with standard rafter framed roof. The structure of this building has minimal structural decay with the majority of the building elements.



1.2 D



1.2 E



1.2 F

### 1.3 STAGE

40'X60'

WOOD STUD AND RAFTER CONSTRUCTION

The stage building is showing major signs of decay in the floor boards and structural framing of the stage along with a large section of missing siding on the back of the building. The saltbox style roof is built with wood rafter framing and wood stud bearing walls.

## PRAIRIE JUNCTION



2.1A



2.1B



2.1C

### 2.1 PRAIRIE JUNCTION MAIN BUILDING

80'x150'

WOOD STUD CONSTRUCTION

The prairie junction main building is a combination of multiple storefronts in one linear building. Originally this building was built with standard wood stud construction with wood rafter roof framing. This building has collapsed in multiple areas and shows severe deterioration of the structural systems almost everywhere else. The storefronts are also missing all of the original Frontier Town facade signage.



2.2A



2.2B



2.3A



2.3B

### 2.2 FORT CLUSTER FORTRESS WALL 350

LINEAR FEET x 12' HIGH

VERTICAL LOG CONSTRUCTION

The Fort Custer Fortress walls are built from approximately 6"-10" logs vertically fastened to a log framework. From our investigation it seemed that the majority of the walls are still intact and do not show major signs of decay.

### 2.3 FORT CLUSTER BUILDINGS 15'x20'

Building

LOG BUILDING

There are two log buildings inside of the Fort Custer Fortress Walls. The larger building's roof is completely collapsed in on itself. The smaller log building is still standing but has considerable roof decay.

## PRAIRIE JUNCTION



2.4A



2.4B



2.4C

### 2.4 PRAIRIE JUNCTION BUILDING 1

30'x50'

LOG POST AND BEAM CONSTRUCTION

This building consists of two portions: what looks to have been a log post and beam covered walkway and a log lean-to. The covered walkway roof has collapsed and the southernmost portion is being held up by the roof of the lean-to. The lean-to building is intact but show signs of roof decay.



2.5A



2.5B



2.5C

### 2.5 PRAIRIE JUNCTION BUILDING 2

20'x35'

POST AND BEAM PAVILION

This building is constructed with post and beam construction and painted rough sawn lumber siding. Overall, the structure of this building looks to be intact and does not show much signs of decay. There is considerable moss growth on the roof which leads us to believe that the roof framing and substrate has severe water damage even though the structure has not failed yet.

## PRAIRIE JUNCTION



2.6A



2.6B



2.6C

### 2.6 PRAIRIE JUNCTION BUILDING 3

25'x46'

POST AND BEAM CONSTRUCTION

The structural framing for this building is wood post and beam construction with a hip roof. The structural framing system appears to be sound but the roof does show signs of substrate decay.



2.7A



2.7B



2.7C

### 2.7 CAROUSEL PARK BUILDING

25'x25'

POST AND BEAM CONSTRUCTION

The Carousel Park building has a poured concrete base with wood post and beam hexagonal gazebo roof. The major framing system looks to be intact and appears to have minimal decay. Similar to other buildings in this area, the roof does show signs of decay of the substrate.

## PIONEER VILLAGE



3.1A



3.1B



3.1C

### 3.1 PIONEER VILLAGE CHURCH

20'x40'

LOG CONSTRUCTION

The Church building is one of the iconic pieces of the remaining Frontier Town buildings. From the exterior, this log building appears to be maintaining its structural integrity but interior supports have been added to prevent the structure from collapsing in on itself. Along with the structural supports, the floor inside the building is severely decayed in areas and overall is in poor condition.



3.2A



3.2B



3.2C

### 3.2 PIONEER VILLAGE BUILDING 1

25'x30'

LOG CONSTRUCTION

This log building appears to have all of its original exterior elements intact. The roof has very heavy moss growth which leads us to believe that the substrate and roof structural members have heavy damage and decay.

## PIONEER VILLAGE



3.3A



3.3B



3.3C

### 3.3 PIONEER VILLAGE STAGE LINE

60'x60'

LOG POST AND BEAM CONSTRUCTION

This is the sister station of the A-Frame Stage Line building. This building has log post and beam construction with a log framed roof system. Similar to the Pioneer Village Building 1, the roof of this building has very heavy moss growth. The main structural members and floor seem to have settled over the years and is no longer level.



3.4A



3.4B



3.4C

### 3.4 PIONEER VILLAGE STABLE BUILDING 1

25'x30'

LOG POST AND BEAM, CONSTRUCTION

This log post and beam stable building has a partially collapsed roof in the center the southwest facing side and is also missing some of the original rough sawn lumber siding. Other section of log framing also look to failing and the building has major signs of structural decay.

## PIONEER VILLAGE



3.5A



3.5B



3.5C

### 3.5 PIONEER VILLAGE STABLE BUILDING 2

30'x30'

LOG POST AND BEAM CONSTRUCTION

Similar to the Pioneer Village Stable Building 1, this building is missing sections of the original rough sawn lumber siding, however, this building's structural integrity is much better. The log post and beam construction does not have the decay the other building showed and the roof looks to be in fair condition.



3.6A



3.6B



3.6C

### 3.6 PIONEER VILLAGE BUILDING 2

25'x30'

WOOD STUD CONSTRUCTION

This building is of wood stud bearing walls and rafter construction. The roof of this building also has heavy moss growth that has caused a section of the porch roof to collapse. Some siding on the north side of the building is missing and has exposed the wall framing.

## PIONEER VILLAGE



3.7A



3.7B



3.7C

### 3.7 PIONEER VILLAGE BUILDING 3

25'x25'

LOG CONSTRUCTION

The first of six log cabin buildings in Pioneer Village, from the exterior this building appears to be in fair condition but inside there are some structural members that have fallen. This has not caused the roof structure to sag or collapse yet but the overall system is compromised.



3.8A



3.8B



3.8C

### 3.8 PIONEER VILLAGE BUILDING 4

25'x25'

LOG CONSTRUCTION

The second of six log cabin buildings, this building is in the best condition of all the cabins. The roof structure appears to be fully intact and not showing signs of failure. Inside of the building the floor appears to be in stable condition with no signs of decay and the interior wall finish is intact.

PIONEER VILLAGE



3.9A



3.9B

3.9 PIONEER VILLAGE BUILDING 5

25'x25'

LOG CONSTRUCTION

The third of six log cabin buildings, the roof structure of this building has collapsed into the building.



3.10A



3.10B



3.10C

3.10 PIONEER VILLAGE BUILDING 6

40'x50'

LOG CONSTRUCTION

The fourth of six log cabin buildings, the roof structure of this building has collapsed into the building.

## PIONEER VILLAGE



3.11A



3.11B

### 3.11 PIONEER VILLAGE BUILDING 7

30'x30'

LOG BUILDING

The fifth of six log cabin buildings, the exterior walls appear to be stable but were showing signs of decay. The roof does have major moss growth which leads us to believe the substrate and roof structure might be compromised. The doors were boarded up so no interior investigation was performed.



3.12A



3.12B

### 3.12 PIONEER VILLAGE BUILDING 8

25'x30'

LOG BUILDING

Major decay present. The structures siding and roof have heavy moss growth and decay of assemblies.

## PIONEER VILLAGE



3.13A



3.13B



3.13C

### 3.13 PIONEER VILLAGE BUILDING 9

35'x35'

LOG BUILDING

This log fortress building appears to have all the original exterior components intact. The log walls appear to have minimal decay and are still supporting the roof structure. There is one section of roof that has decayed and now has a hole to the exterior. Other than that one section the roof appears to be intact. The second floor and stair structure inside the building also is intact and appears to be stable.



3.14A



3.14B

### 3.14 PETTING ZOO BUILDING

30'x50'

STUD BEARING WALL

This building appears to be constructed from stud bearing wall construction with a log exterior siding. The main building structure appears to be in fair condition and the roof has metal roofing that assumed to not be original to the building. There is a small addition off of the east end of the building that has collapsed.

## RODEO ARENA



4.1A

### 4.1 MAIN ARENA GRAND STANDS

20'x140' AND 15'x70'

WOOD CONSTRUCTION

There are two main sections of the grand stands, one section on the west end of the original arena and one section on the south side of the arena. Both sections are extremely decayed and have sections of framing that are completely disintegrated.



4.1B



4.2A

### 4.2 MAIN ARENA ANNOUNCERS BOOTH

8'x15'

POST AND BEAM CONSTRUCTION

The announcers booth is constructed with post and beam construction with a small gable roof. It appears to still have structural integrity.



4.3A

### 4.3 MAIN ARENA STABLE BUILDING 1

20'x30'

POST AND BEAM CONSTRUCTION

This building is a series of three connected buildings that are at the northeastern part of the Arena area. The roofing is missing in some portions of the building but the roof structure does not appear to be decayed to the same level.



4.4A

### 4.4 MAIN ARENA STABLE BUILDING 2

20'x30'

LOG POST AND BEAM CONSTRUCTION

This small lean-to style building is missing siding in some sections but the main structure and roof structure appear to be intact and stable.



4.5A

### 4.5 MAIN ARENA STABLE BUILDING 3

20'x100'

LOG POST AND BEAM CONSTRUCTION

Sections of the shingles are missing but the overall roof structure appears to be intact and stable. The main post and beam structure also appears to be in fair condition.

## ROTH'S FORGE VILLAGE



5.1A



5.1B

**5.1 COVERED BRIDGE**  
20'x50'  
WOOD CONSTRUCTION

All of the components of the covered bridge are still intact and in fair condition. Overall the main structure of the bridge and roof appears to be stable and show minimal signs of decay. The floor of the bridge was stable to walk across and did not have areas of compromised flooring.



5.2A



5.2B



5.2C



5.2D

**5.2 GRIST MILL BUILDING 1**  
30'x80'

POST AND BEAM CONSTRUCTION

The Grist Mill Building is a two story wood stud bearing wall building that has a water wheel on the south side of the building. The water wheel has been partially destroyed and is no longer functional but the building appears to be in fair condition. The roof has minimal moss growth and the ridge of the roof still appears to be stable. An interior investigation of this building was not conducted.

## ROTH'S FORGE VILLAGE



5.3A

### 5.3 GRIST MILL BUILDING 2

Unknown

UNKOWN

On the original Frontier Town park map there was a second building that connected to the Grist Mill Building 1 via a wooden aqueduct. This building is completely destroyed with only remnants of the wooden structure remaining.



5.4A



5.4B



5.4C

### 5.4 SAW MILL BUILDING

50'x100'

POST AND BEAM CONSTRUCTION

This log post and beam building consists of two distinct sections: the main building that housed the saw mill equipment and an addition building off of the south end that housed the boilers. The structure for both buildings appears to have settled over time causing the roof to become uneven. Besides the settling, the building structural components appears to be stable.

## ROTH'S FORGE VILLAGE



5.5A

### 5.5 MUSEUM UNKNOWN UNKNOWN

Similar to the Grist Mill Building 2, the original Frontier Town park map shows that a museum building was once on this site. The building has completely collapsed



5.6A

### 5.6 ICE HOUSE BUILDING

20'x20'

POST AND BEAM CONSTRUCTION

This building appears to have been constructed with log post and beam construction with a double exterior wall that used to have a thermal envelope. Many of the exterior siding boards are missing but the main structure appears to be intact and stable.



5.6B



5.7A

### 5.7 REST ROOM BUILDING

20'x20'

WOOD CONSTRUCTION

This building appears to be wood stud bearing wall construction with rough sawn lumber siding. From our exterior inspection, the building does not appear to have any major decay but an interior inspection of the building was not possible.



5.7B

# APPENDIX E: STAKEHOLDER MEETING SUMMARIES

## PROJECT KICK-OFF MEETING

Saratoga Springs, NY

May 15, 2019

The Project Kick-off Meeting provided the first opportunity for the Design Team to meet stakeholders and record their initial impressions and vision for the Adirondack Gateway. The meeting hosted 22 total participants representing many immediate stakeholder categories (OSI, DEC, ESD, adjacent land owner, towns, and county).

### Anticipated Audience

Participants share their vision for members of the public that they can reliably predict will patronize the ADK Gateway as well as members of the public who participants hope will come to the facility.

### Site Resources

All of the stakeholders attending had at least a passing familiarity with the Upper Hudson Recreation Hub campus and the potential project sites within. This exercise provided participants the chance to identify site features, both natural and man-made, that are recommended for preservation / incorporation into the ADK Gateway.

### Regional Resources

Identify Adirondack Park attractions, historical episodes and regional characteristics that are opportunities for interpretive exploration at the ADK Gateway.

### World Class Precedents

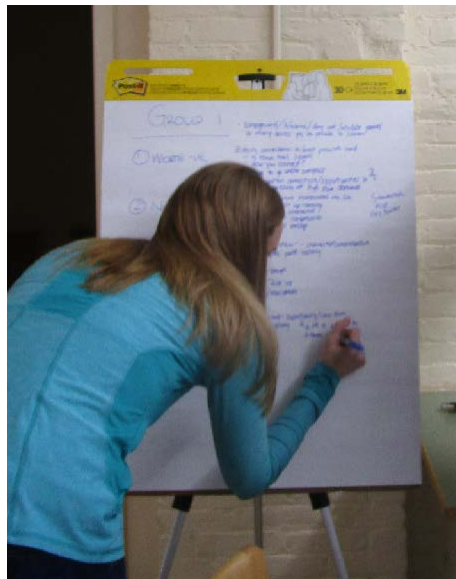
Participants reviewed precedent design imagery from world-class projects (architecture, interpretive exhibition spaces, educational and active outdoor environments, programming, etc) across the globe and identified potential interventions at the ADK Gateway.



World-Class Precedents Exercise



Site Resources Exercise



Regional Resources Exercise

The meeting concluded with a site tour the Upper Hudson Hub.

# STAKEHOLDER FOCUS GROUPS

Various Locations  
May - July 2019

Following the Project Kick-off Meeting, the planning team held a series of stakeholder focus meetings to convene different interest group perspectives on the project and possibilities. Each stakeholder focus group meeting focused on a separate topic: Conservation, Economic Development, and Municipal Administration (Five Towns), Arts and Culture Advocacy, Hospitality (Food, Lodging and Retail), and Recreation and Outdoor Activity.

## Journey Mapping

Participants envision each step of a guest's visit to the Adirondack Gateway, from initial travel research to departure, and identify the anticipated programs and services the guest will encounter.

## Postcard Message

Participants imagine what visitors will find exciting at the ADK Gateway and worth sharing with their friends or loved ones via a postcard or social media platform.

## Success Story

Participants share their top three criteria for recognizing the future Adirondack Gateway's success.

## Connecting to the Park Experience

Participants were asked to identify five interactive experiences that best make the connection to Adirondack Park amenities / attractions / businesses based on participants' experiences in the region.



Economic Development Stakeholder Focus Meeting

*Stewardship = 5-Towns - mini = curated experiences*

*Seaplanes, Boating, Events, Great Camps*

### EXERCISE 3: CONNECTING TO THE PARK EXPERIENCE

The primary objective of our project is to develop the Gateway as a launching pad from which visitors can start their ADK Adventure.

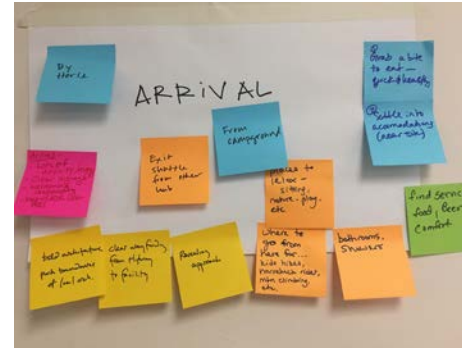
Identify five interactive experiences that best make the connection to ADK Park amenities / attractions / businesses.

*canoeing, kayaking, horse riding, mini experience*

**ADIRONDACK GATEWAY at UPPER HUDSON** | **studioA** | **OPEN SPACE INSTITUTE** | **moeys** | **PARTNER WORKSHOP MAY 21, 2019**

Feedback on Connections Exercise

# KICK-OFF & FOCUS MEETINGS BY THE NUMBERS



**Number of workshops:** 9

**Number of Participants:** 48

**Meeting Locations:** 4

**Farthest Distance Between Workshops:**  
255 miles (NYC / North Hudson)



**Representatives from:**

- Open Space Institute
- NYS DEC
- NYS Empire State Development
- Private Investors
- Town of North Hudson
- Town of Willsboro
- Town of Long Lake
- Town of Indian
- Lake Essex County
- Adirondack Regional Chamber of Commerce
- ROOST
- Elk Lake Lodge
- Great Camp Sagamore
- The Wild Center
- Adirondack Experience
- AARCH
- Adirondack Mountain Club
- Paradox Brewery
- Lakes to Locks
- Adirondack Art Association



# EXPERIENCE WORKSHOP

Warrensburg, NY  
August 8, 2019

The Experience Workshop brought all participants together to 1) communicate openly regarding their various positions, to 2) collaborate on a series of structured design challenges, and 3) compromise to achieve proposals for these challenges that would inform a successful direction for the new interpretive and visitor orientation amenities at the Adirondack Gateway.

Workshop facilitators presented the results of the earlier engagement meetings and the site inventory and analysis. The second half of the workshop focused on the three collaborative exercises that aimed to 1) identify the overarching character and vision for the Adirondack Gateway, 2) identify the most critical programs and services, and 3) distribute these programs and services around the Hub.

## The Big Idea

According to the engagement feedback, an ambiguous brand can result in apathetic or indifferent commercial response, so critical to the success of the new Adirondack Gateway is a clear and easily discernible identity. The Big Idea aimed to galvanize the collective vision for what this Hub will represent and the message it will communicate.

## Programming

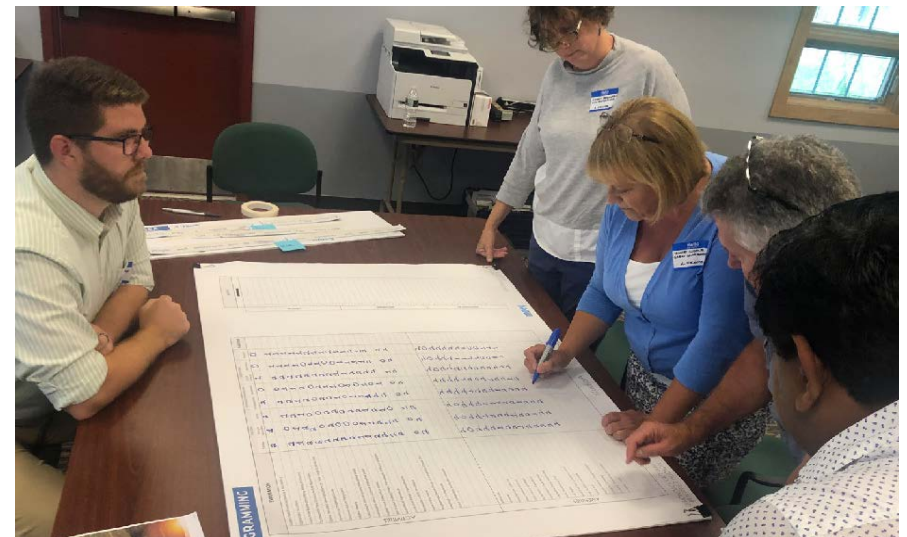
A list of ideas for possible programs, amenities, and services was generated from the earlier engagement meetings. The goal of the Programming exercise is for each groups' participants to collectively assign a value to each of the listed programs.

## Spatial Organization

The goal of the final exercise was to take the list of critical and secondary programs each group generated in the previous exercise and locate each of these in their optimal location within the Hub campus.



Participants at the Experience Workshop

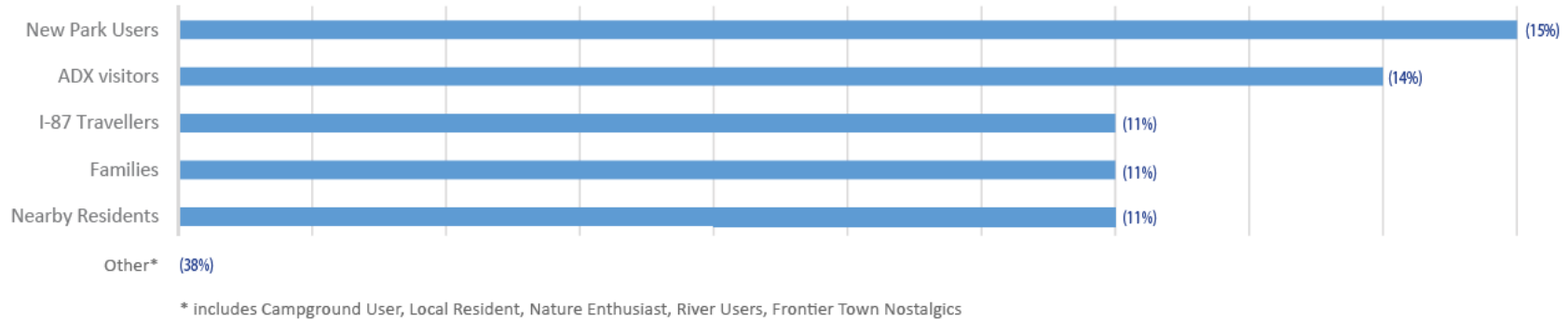


Participants develop project programming

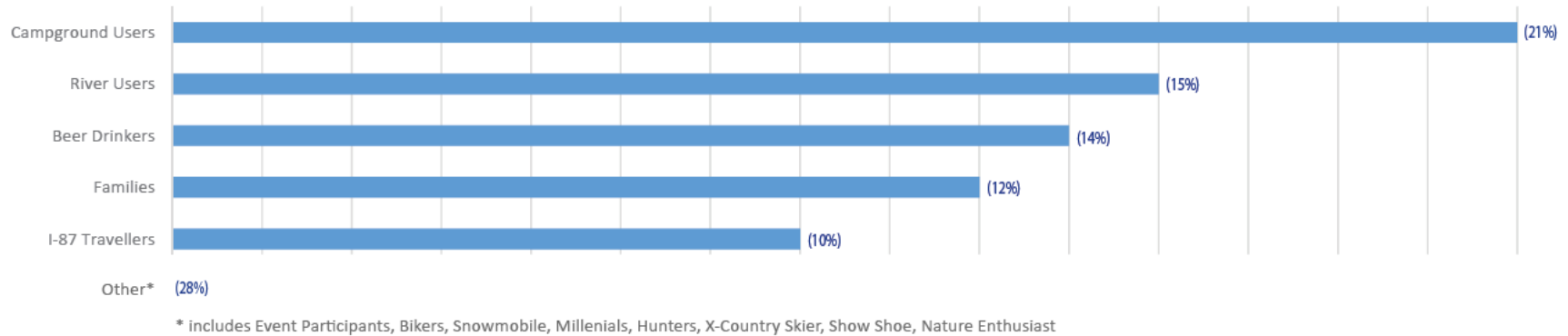
# APPENDIX F: ENGAGEMENT ANALYSIS

## ANTICIPATED AUDIENCE

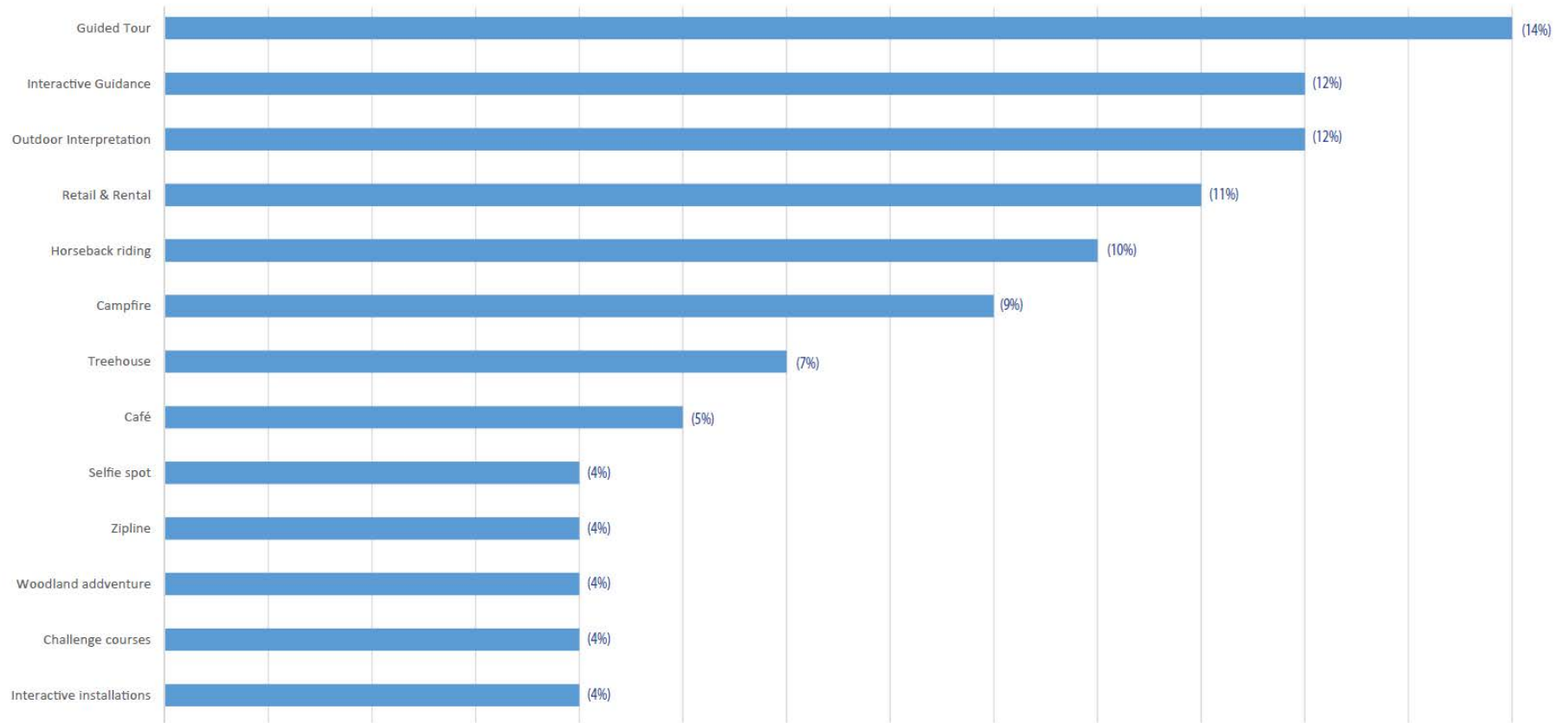
### VISITORS WE *HOPE* WILL COME TO THE FACILITY



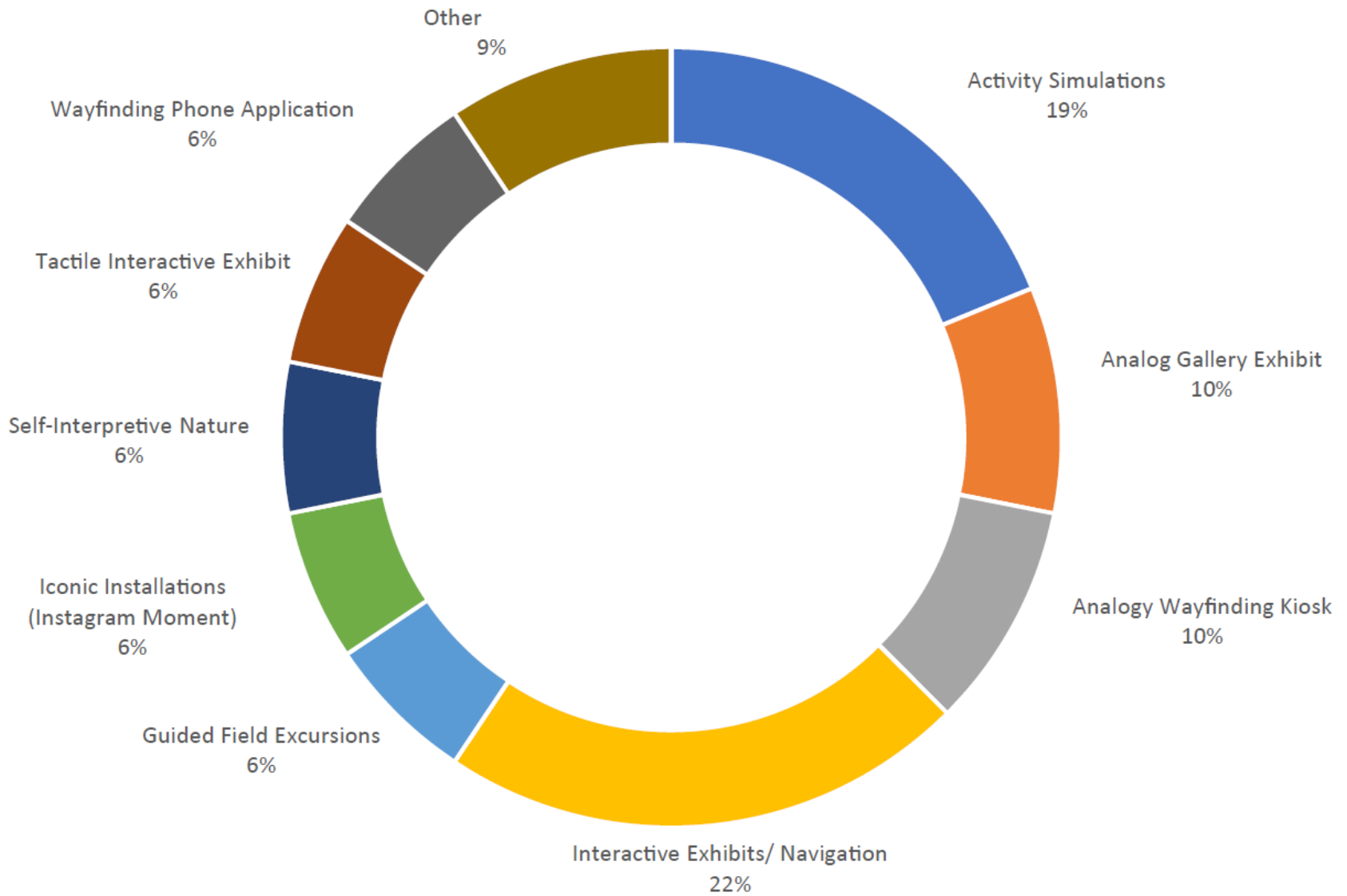
### VISITORS WE *KNOW* WILL COME TO THE FACILITY



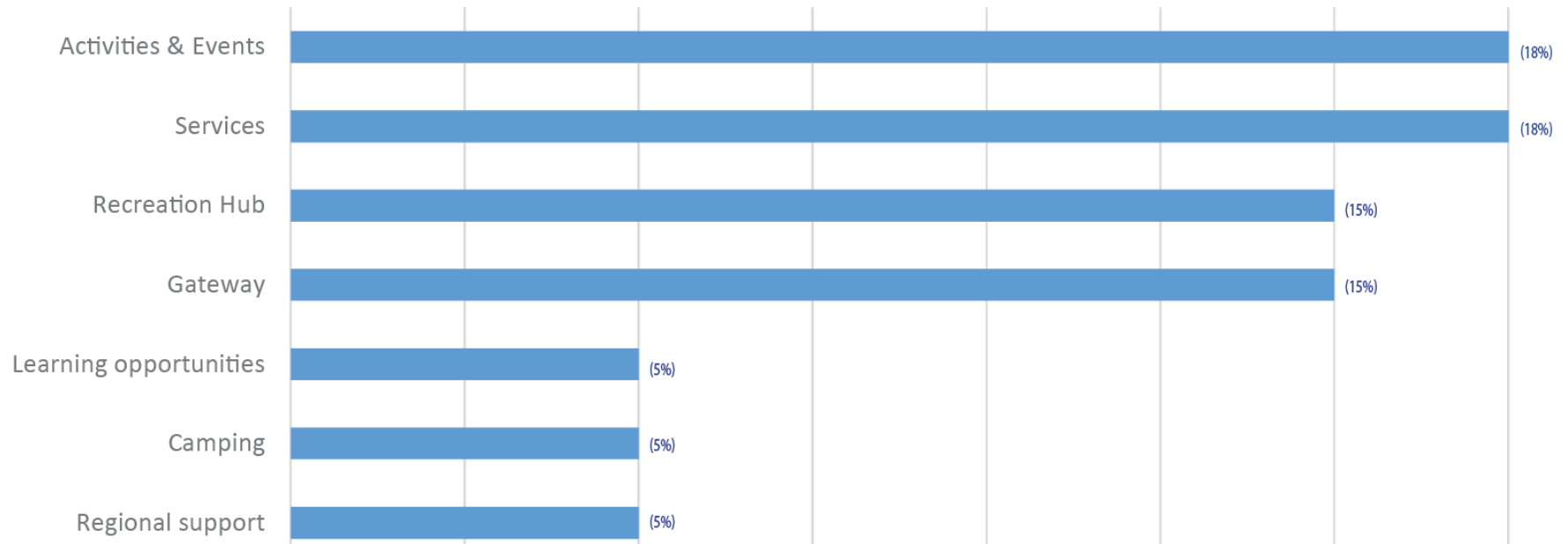
## DESIRED PROGRAM



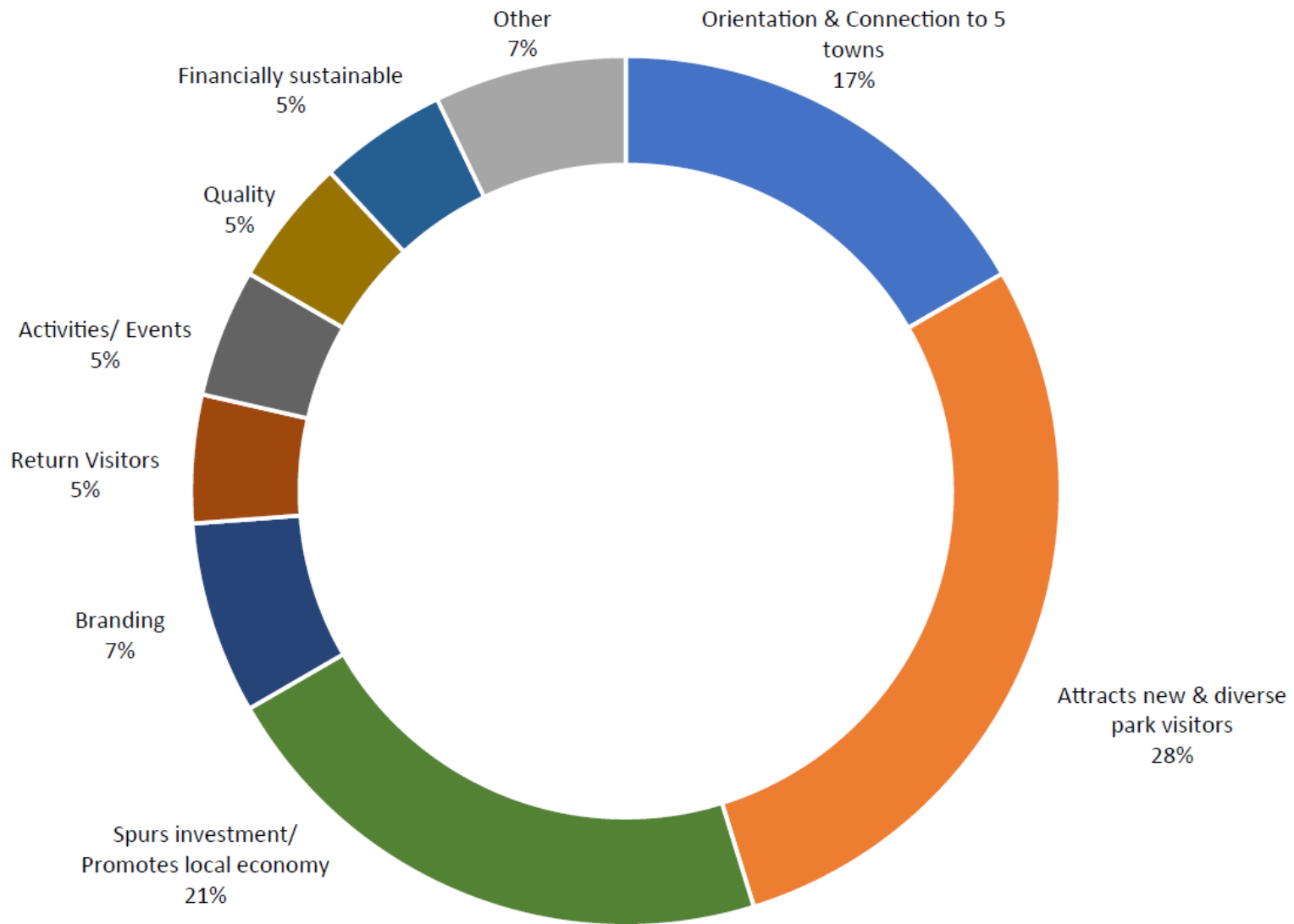
CONNECTING TO THE PARK EXPERIENCE



## IDENTITY



SUCCESS STORY



# JOURNEY MAPPING

## PLANNING

Who?	How?	What?
Church Group from Queens all adults (15 total)	Internet Research	Lodging Reservations
Family with Young Kids from NY State	Personal Knowledge	Range of Activities
Family w/ young kids from metro city	Social Media	Everyday Visitors
Low to Middle Class People		Hikes for Beginners
		Group Inclusion
		Directions
		Weather
		Convenience
		Gas / Rest
		Natural Setting

## ARRIVAL

Who?	How?	What?
Church Group from Queens all adults (15 total)	Foot	Lodging Check-in
Family with Young Kids from NY State	Personal Vehicle	Photo Sharing Online
Family w/ young kids from metro city	Rental Vehicle	Easy Access
Low to Middle Class People	Water	Natural Beauty
	RVs	Quick Site Tour
		Walk / Hike
		Fuel Up

## ENTRANCE

Who?	Where?	What?
Church Group from Queens all adults (15 total)	A-Frame	Orientation
Family with Young Kids from NY State		Food
Family w/ young kids from metro city		Supplies
Low to Middle Class People		Shop
		Equipment Rental

## EXPLORE

Who?	How?	What?
Church Group from Queens all adults (15 total)	Activity Sign-Up	Hiking
Family with Young Kids from NY State	Guides	Marketplace
Family w/ young kids from metro city	Trails	Canoeing
Low to Middle Class People		Play Facilities
		Tours
		Restaurants
		Recreation

## DISCOVERY

Who?	How?	What?
Church Group from Queens all adults (15 total)	Pamphlets	History
Family with Young Kids from NY State	Guides	To-Do's in Area
Family w/ young kids from metro city	Interactive Ways	Nearby Landmarks
Low to Middle Class People	Phone App	Nearby Water
		Momentos
		Food/Beverage
		Retail
		Local Business

## DEPARTURE

Who?	How?	What?
Church Group from Queens all adults (15 total)	Foot	Oriented
Family with Young Kids from NY State	Personal Vehicle	Interested in Return
Family w/ young kids from metro city	Rental Vehicle	Amazement
Low to Middle Class People	Water	Surprised
	RVs	Commitment to Return
		List of Things To Do
		Reflection

# JOURNEY MAPPING SUMMARY

## JOURNEY

### Trip Planning

- Internet search
- Word of mouth/ social media

### Arrival

- Connections from ancillary hub services
- Navigation

### Entry

- Immediately recognizable/ visible
- Iconic/reflective of the Adirondacks

### Explore

- Accessible/ universal
- Seamless
- Interactive/ dynamic

### Discover

- Connections/ guidance/ navigation
- Events
- Multi-generational (especially engaging children)

### Departure

- Heading to planned adventure with guidance from a visitor center

### Return

- Lodging
- Food/ fuel/ retail
- Restrooms

## IDENTITY

- Connections/ orientation
- Activities/ events
- Services
- "Spoke in the wheel" (a critical piece of the Hub composition)

## AUDIENCE

- Visitors we know will come to the ADK Gateway: beer enthusiasts, campground users, river users
- Visitors we want will come to the ADK Gateway: non-traditional park user/ diverse groups (younger, multi-racial/ ethnic, abilities), Adirondack outdoor enthusiasts
- Both categories: families, I-87 travelers

## PROGRAM

- Interactive guidance
- Human guidance
- Retail/ rental
- Outdoor interpretation

## CONNECTION

- Interactive exhibits/ navigation
- Tactile exhibits/ navigation
- Activity simulations
- Discovery play

## GOALS

- Orientation & connection to the Five Towns
- Attracts new & diverse park visitors
- Spurs ancillary investment/ promotes local economy

# ANECDOTAL FEEDBACK

## ACCESS FROM I-87

- There was a strong sentiment for Adirondack Gateway amenities, such as a visitor facility, to be located at the A-Frame parcel for it be financially sustainable.
- Participants saw the lack of a prominent identity from the Northway, as well as the additional distance and time required to travel from the Exit 29 off-ramp, as a significant deterrent to locate visitor amenities at the Town parcel.

## FRONTIER TOWN

- Limited support for incorporating Frontier Town into interpretive programming.
- Most participants couldn't see the appeal to contemporary audience.
- Several participants expressed concern regarding previous portrayal of Native Americans.

## SEASONALITY

- Respondents shared the weather challenges presented by the winter season.
- The lack of a nearby downhill ski mountain, coupled with the lack of established alternative winter sport facilities (cross-country skiing, skating, snowmobiling, ice climbing) in the area.
- It will take several seasons to get dedicated winter sport interests established.

## LODGING

- For many participants, the lack of lodging options represent the greatest challenge to the success of the Adirondack Gateway.
- Airbnb has helped to bridge this problem, but it is not viewed as a long-term solution.

## EQUESTRIANS

- We have engaged on a limited basis with equestrian users of the campground
- They cite a lack of supporting amenities/ services that would be desirable for them to plan a return trip.
- Some comments reflect a desire for a range of budget options regarding lodging (not all horse owners want to camp).

## TRANSIT

- Lack of public transit service in the region seen as an impediment to opening the facility to a broader audience.
- Future public transit planning should study opportunities to: 1) connect the Hub to metro centers and 2) connect the Hub to recreation destinations.
- In this capacity, the Recreation Hub can also serve as a Transit Hub.

## OPERATION

- Lack of a clearly defined operator and operations strategy created confusion and frustration amongst the participants. They expressed the challenge of planning for a new facility when it is unclear what organization would own and operate it.

## NOTED RECREATION OPTIONS

- Boreas Pond Tract
- Mt. Marcy
- Dix Mountain
- Indian Lake
- Long Lake Water Planes
- Sharpe Ridge Campground
- Bike Trails in North Hudson
- Schroon River to Schroon Lake Rafting
- Newcomb ADK Interpretive Center

## APPENDIX G: CAMPER SURVEY ANALYSIS



Frontier Town Campground



Tent Campsite



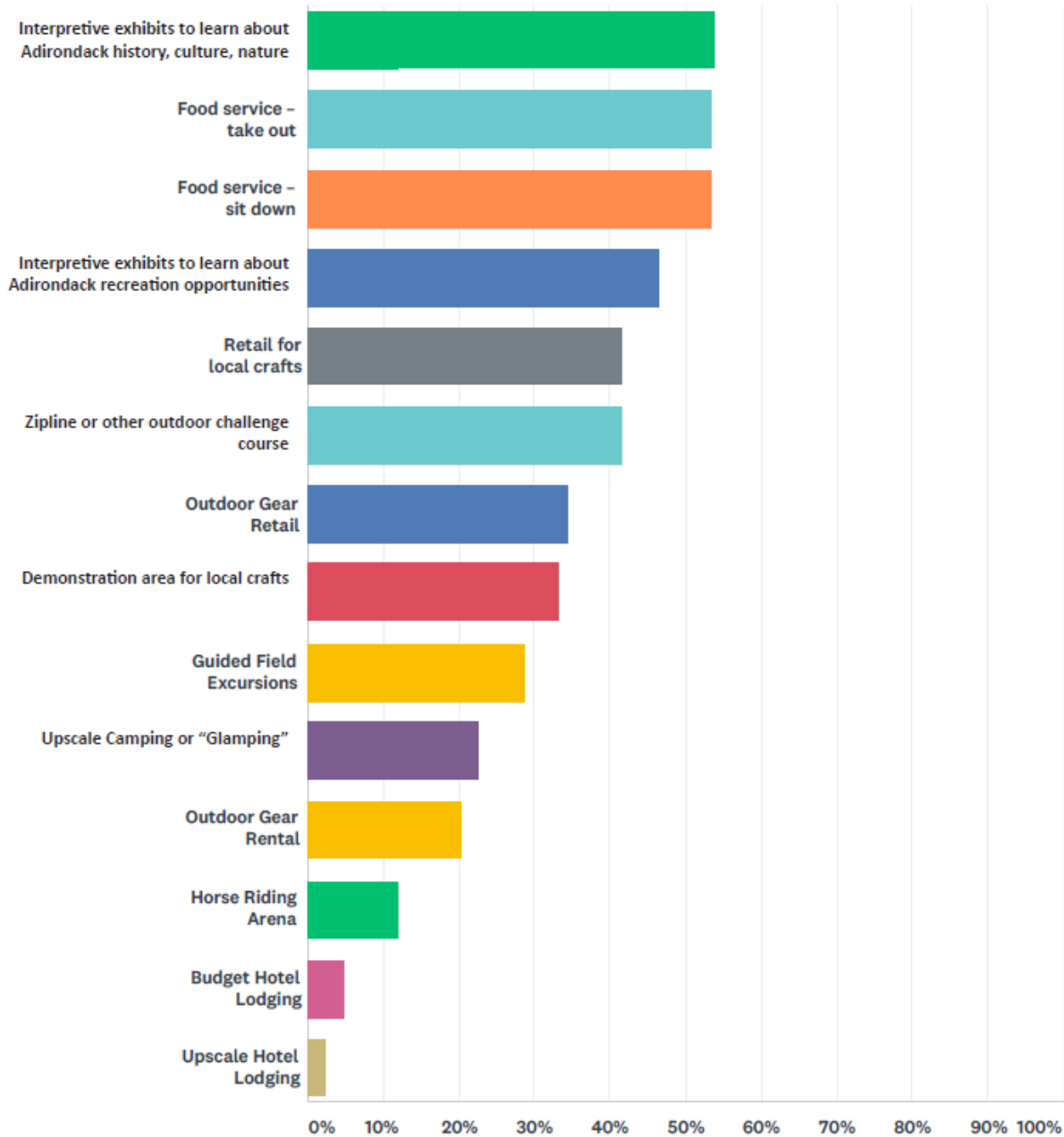
Day-Use Area Playground (Source: NYS DEC website)

Valuable feedback was obtained from patrons of the new Frontier Town Campground. In coordination with NYS DEC, the operators of the Frontier Town Campground, a digital survey was emailed to recent campground users with questions about the camper and their group, their plans within the Adirondack Park, and the programs and services they would like to see represented in the future Adirondack Gateway.

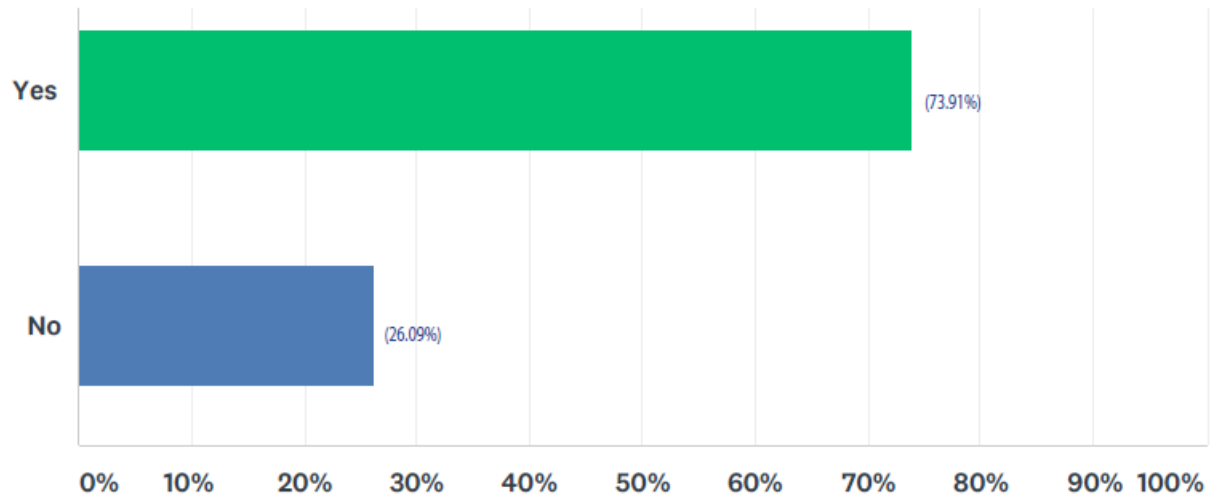
A total of 92 campers responded to the survey. The median size of the camping group was 1.9 persons, and the median age was 35. Two-thirds of the respondents were traveling 100 miles or less from their home, although there were visitors from as far away as Canada and Texas. Campers spent an average of 2.9 nights at the campground and nearly 80% of respondents were traveling to other attractions within the Adirondack Park. An overwhelming number of the respondents identify primarily as Campers (88%), as opposed to Equestrians (3%) or other categories.

When asked about desired future amenities, respondents said they would like to see interpretive exhibits relating information about Adirondack history, culture, nature, and recreation opportunities. Many also responded with a desire for take-out food service, site-down food service, and retail for local Adirondack crafts. This signals a strong desire for information and connections to the Adirondack Park and its culture, as well as the need for basic necessities such as food and supplies.

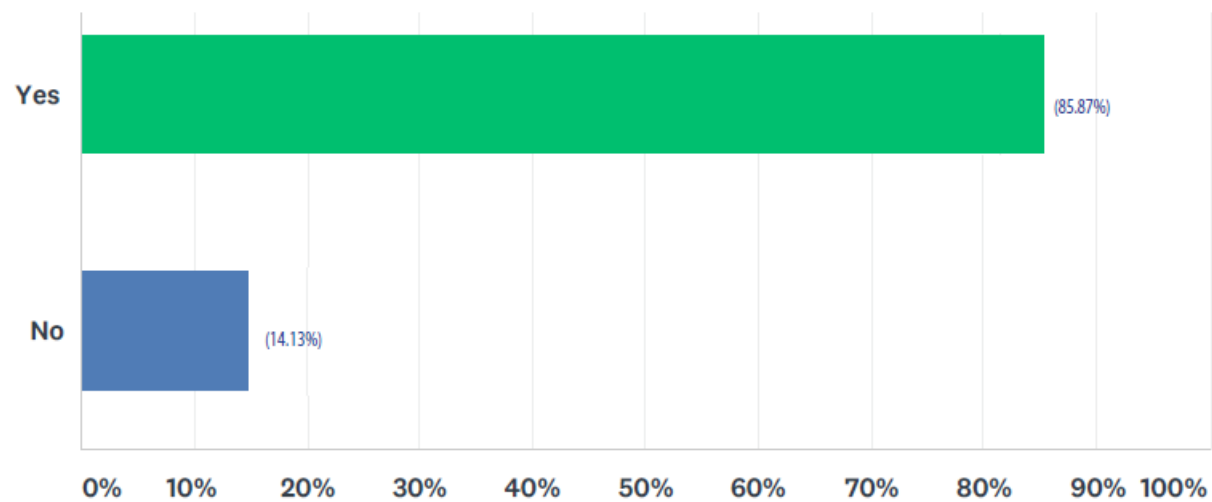
**DESIRED PROGRAM**



**ARE YOU PLANNING A RETURN TRIP?**

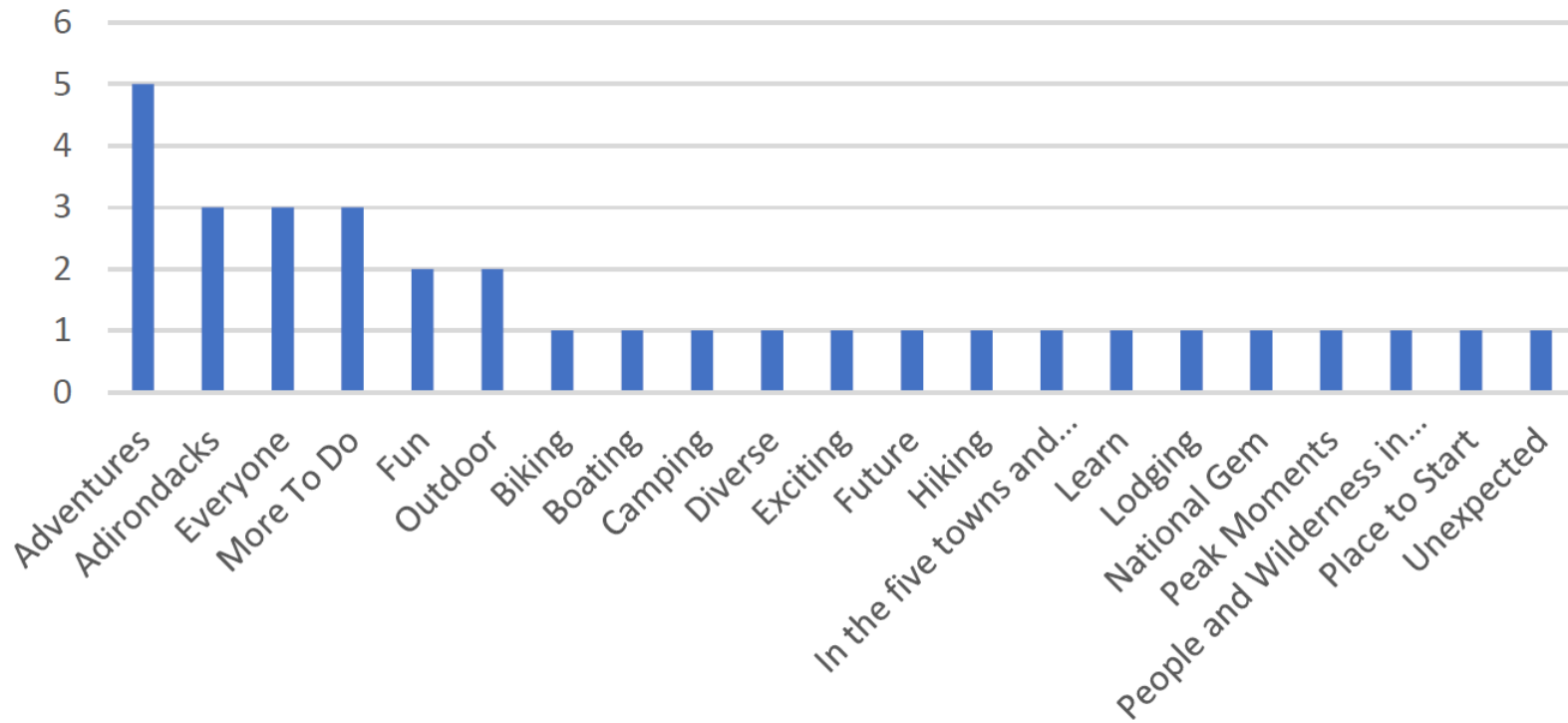


**WOULD YOU RETURN IF ANY OF THE PROGRAMS WERE AVAILABLE?**

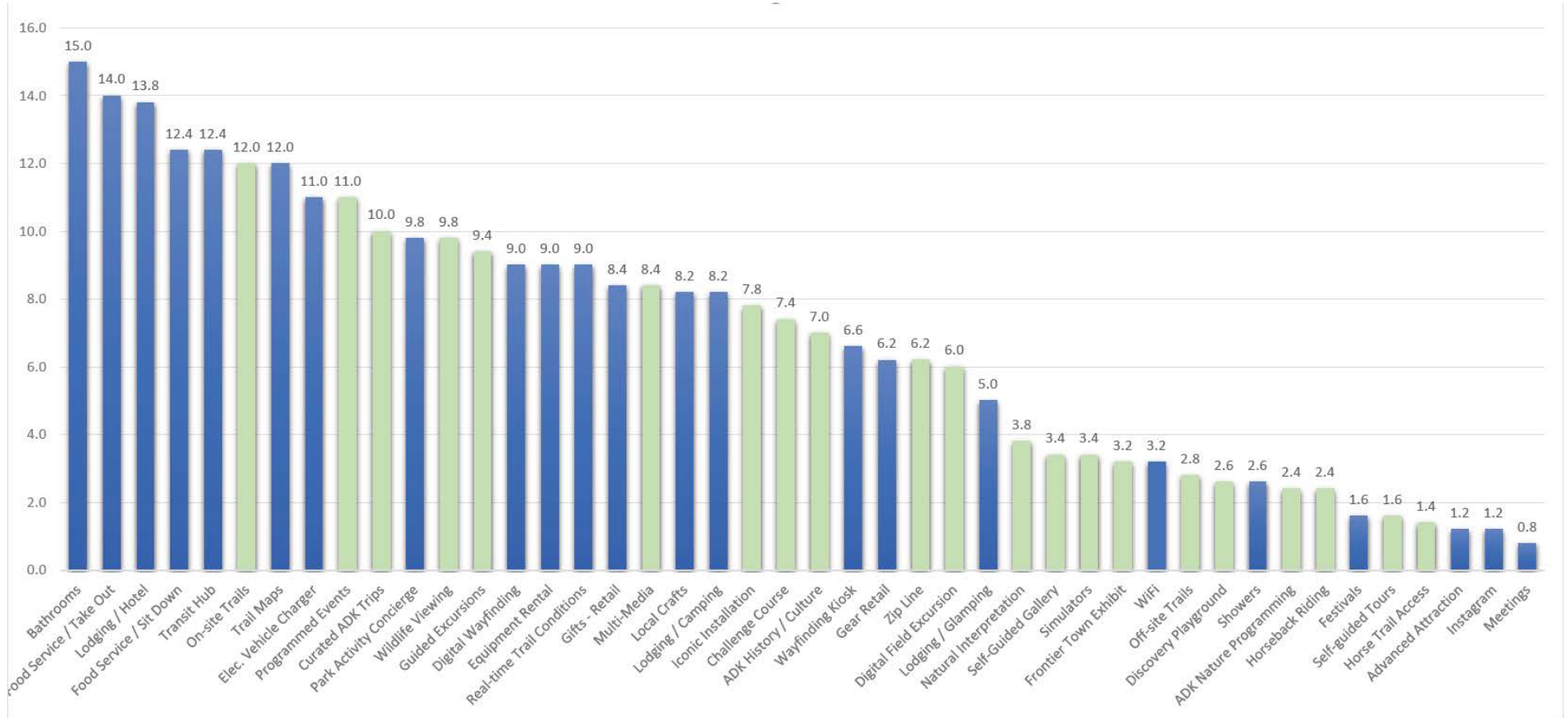


# APPENDIX H: EXPERIENCE WORKSHOP ANALYSIS

## THE BIG IDEA



## PROGRAMMING



## SPATIAL ORGANIZATION

